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The Catholic
CHRISTIAN'S GUIDE
TO THE RIGHT USE OF
Christian Psalmody

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THE

CATHOLIC CHRISTIAN'S GUIDE

TO THE RIGHT USE OF

Christian Psalmody

AND OF

THE PSALTER.

BY

THE REV. H. FORMBY.



Misericordias Domini in æternum cantabo.
Ps. lxxviii. l.

London:
THOMAS RICHARDSON AND SON,
172, FLEET STREET; 9, CAPEL STREET, DUBLIN;
AND DERBY.
1846.

893.
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TO

A. WELBY PUGIN, ESQ^RE.

WITH THE PRAYER,

THAT

A LIFE SO VALUABLE

MAY BE LONG SPARED TO

The Church.

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Advertisement.

THE present little book has been written, as an effort towards inspiring an adequate sense of the intrinsic value of Christian Psalmody, for divine worship, and for Christian social life. It is an obvious, yet not on that account a less true observation, that it cannot but be vastly at variance with the purpose of God in bestowing a noble gift, to have it wasted upon things aimless and unmeaning, if not positively bad. The writer's principal aim, therefore, has been, to lay before those to whom a musical talent has been given, the motives proper to induce them to make the attempt, as also to show them the manner in which they may best hope to succeed, in turning their gift to the glory of its Divine giver, and their own and their neighbour's happiness.

His next aim, almost a necessary sequel of the first, has been to explain as fully as

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a limited space would permit, the special value of the gift of the Psalter, with the manner of its twofold divinely intended use; *viz.*—I. as the Christian Psalm or Song Book, and,—II. as a manual of private meditation and prayer. It is hoped also, that this is a seasonable attempt, "verbum diei in die suo." It cannot be for nothing, that Almighty God, after so long an interval of wrath and desolation, is now permitting, as it were, the former sanctuaries of England to arise and cover the land. This surely forms a good ground of hope, that the Church, in our beloved country, may once again hear her former Matins and Vesper Songs; and those of her long forgotten Gradual,—Et Ædificaberis Virgo Israel, and as the natural sequel, Adhuc ornaberis tympanis tuis, et egredieris in choro ludentium. *(Jer.* xxxi. 4.*)*

It only remains to be said, that the quotations from the Psalter are given chiefly in the Latin, from the difficulty of making a choice out of the many English versions that might have been used. And if the Catholic reader is surprised with the occasional use of a version, possessed of no

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Catholic sanction, though dear to the Author's memory, it may be explained by the fact, that the substance of the work was written while the Author was still a clergyman of the established Church, and at that time not familiar with any other.

H. F.

University of Louvain,
Belgium,
Feast of the Immaculate Conception,
1846.

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THE

CATHOLIC CHRISTIAN'S GUIDE

TO THE RIGHT USE OF

Christian Psalmody

AND OF THE PSALTER.

CHAPTER I.

OF PSALMODY, AND THE CHRISTIAN USE OF MUSIC.

QUESTION. What is the meaning of the words—Psalm, Psalmody, Psalter, and Psaltery?

ANSWER. They are words taken from the Greek, the language chosen for the New Testament. Psalm signifies an inspired song—Psalmody, the singing of psalms—Psalter, a book or collection of psalms—Psaltery, an instrument proper to accompany the voice in singing a psalm.

Q. What kind of instrument was a Psaltery?

A. A stringed instrument, believed to have been invented by king David, sometimes called the Psaltery of David. (Amos vi. 5.)

Q. Is the Psalter in any respect a different book from the other books of the Scripture?

A. It differs from the other books of Holy Scripture, in being a collection of Psalms or Songs for the voice, and has consequently, as such,

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had a use in the Church proper to itself. Our divine Redeemer regarded it as a separate and peculiar book, on the occasion on which (Luke xxiv. 44.) he showed how all things were to be fulfilled which were written concerning him in the Law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in *the Psalms*. He is also said to have used it much as a book of prayer, and died on the cross with its words in his mouth.

Q. Is there any special purport or value in the gift of a book of inspired songs?

A. Yes. Almighty God, at the creation, was pleased to endow man with the love and capacity for Song and Music, which love still remains to him, though banished from Paradise for his transgression. Satan having from the beginning observed this, has ever since the fall been seeking to make man his own slave, by means of his passion for music, and to convert the gift which God gave as a blessing, into a snare and instrument of death. On which account, Almighty God, observing the great danger to which His creation was now exposed, through the very love of song which he had given them, and considering how the devil might in this way gain an influence over whole nations, through His mercy and wisdom determined to disappoint the devil; and to this end, gave men a book of Songs written by the Spirit of God, fit to be sung in every known mode of music, in order by their

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charm, so far beyond anything that the wit and rivalry of Satan could offer, to retain possession of His own creation. By this gift then, given from the pure love and mercy of God, a wholesome and ennobling exercise has been provided for a talent not sparingly given; and henceforth, instead of subtle bewitching music from Satan's school, men, if they like, may have the pure, heavenly, and endlessly varied music of the Psalms.

Q. Now if the gift of a book of Sacred Songs intended for popular use be rightly said to be an instance of the great goodness and wisdom of God, of course this implies the existence of a general capacity to sing, and consequently a corresponding obligation of learning to sing, which, considering the condition of mankind, and the necessity they are under of labouring for their bread, will be in general very burdensome, and often impracticable.

A. Popular Christian Psalmody, in its simple form, is so little intricate, that it admits of being learnt, as language itself, without direct instruction; nor is there any reason to think otherwise than that the people generally would receive very thankfully any efforts that might be made to procure them direct instruction. The labour of learning to sing is not found to be a hardship; indeed, the laws of many kingdoms have required, and do still require it as a compulsory branch of education. Moreover, where the obligation

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exists, the people seem to acquiesce in it very willingly.

However, in point of fact, in Christ's kingdom no such positive obligation exists in any way. Independently of such indications of the Divine will as are addressed only to particular individuals, every Christian is left in perfect liberty. The question is, then, not one of obligation, but of reasonable motives, held out to induce persons freely and voluntarily to apply themselves to the task.

Q. Does the Christian kingdom supply such motives?

A. Nothing in the world can be proposed, except upon sufficient motives; for all action contemplates some kind of reward. Since then the Christian kingdom has not reversed the nature of humanity, in proposing the voluntary cultivation of the gift of song, it must needs offer sufficient motives, and these not necessarily dissimilar from those proper to other societies, except in such particulars as may be peculiar to itself.

Q. What are the motives offered?

A. Seven.

I. Almighty God, creating this world for the manifestation of his own glory, framed his creation incapable of satisfaction in idleness. On the contrary, he endowed them with a conciousness of life, and formed them to delight in the right

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exercise of each faculty he had given them. As then, the mere exercise of the natural faculty of song, is accompanied with its own appropriate and conscious delight, in the case of the Christian singer this delight is Christian and religious.

II. Music especially song, appears to have had assigned to it a special Providential use, both as a means of relaxation, and as a medicine in disturbed states of mind.

"Hoc est cur cantet vinctus quoque compede fossor
Indocili numero, cum grave mollit opus.
Cantat et innitens limosæ pronus arenæ,
Adverso tardam qui vehit amne ratem.
Qui refert pariter lentos ad pectora remos,
In numerum pulsâ brachia versat aquâ.
* * * *
Cantantis pariter, pariter data pensa trahentis
Fallitur ancillæ decipitur que labor."

Ovid, de Tristibus. Eleg. Lib. i.

Μολπὰν τὰι Μῶισαι, μὸι ἀει ποθέοντι διδῶιεν
Τᾶν γλυκερὰν μολπὰν τας φάρμακον ἄδιον ὕυδεν.—

Bionis. Bucolica, i.

"When griping grief the heart doth wound,
And doleful dumps the mind oppress,
Then music with her silver sound,
With speedy help doth lend redress."

Shakespeare. Romeo and Juliet.

The case is not very different with the Christian.—(Ps. 42.) Confitebor tibi in citharâ Deus, Deus meus. Quare tristis es anima mea? et quare conturbas me.—Upon the harp will I sing praise unto Thee, O God, my God. Why art thou so

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heavy? oh my soul! and why art thou so disquieted within me?

Ps. 107. Paratum Cor meum Deus, paratum cor meum, cantabo et psallam in gloriâ meâ.

Ps. 118. Cantabiles mihi erunt, justificationes tuæ in loco peregrinationis mea.—Thy Testimonies have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage.

III. In all kingdoms, music is a chief element in social life, and in them there is a strong motive to its acquirement, in the fact of its being unpleasant to have to stand aloof from any social enjoyment, as well as a good thing to gain a favourable reception in society by means of a socially valuable acquirement. The case in the Christian kingdom is very much the same.

IV. Music is known to possess a powerful charm, capable of being used in the way of attraction or encouragement, to the practice, whether of virtue or vice. In the Christian kingdom, positive rewards are promised to those who labour to encourage virtue. Who, if wise, will neglect so powerful an auxiliary?

V. Song has been, by Divine appointment, raised to an office in the Church, as the voice of praise, and occasionally of prayer. The faculty of singing then, puts within the reach of its possessor, the power of offering a special kind of worship, to which not a few peculiar benefits are annexed. To this, a farther consideration may

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also be added; viz., that the office of Cantor or Psalmist, as instituted by the authority of the Church, with its annexed rewards, is a lawful object of Christian ambition.

VI. The intercession of the Saints in behalf of those still upon earth, is a doctrine of the Catholic faith, known and acted upon by every Catholic, it being usual for us to recommend ourselves to the patronage and intercession of particular Saints, by prayer, or by whatever good actions we have reason to think will move them to intercede for us. Let the Christian singer, then, devoutly apply himself to the task of cultivating his talent, or, when acquired, let him use it patiently and wisely, to draw others to love Christian music, and no action can be so proper to obtain the prayers of the many and great Christian Saints, who spent so much of their lives on earth in the same work. Indeed, if he continue this labour patiently and mildly, he may rest assured of their earnest intercession.

VII. Lastly, the Christian singer, when he has acquired a competent skill in his art, is raised by it to very exalted company; viz., to that of the Blessed Virgin, upon whose Song the sun never sets—that of St. Paul, who sang at midnight—of the old Prophets who looked forward with inexpressible longing to the coming of Christ in the flesh—together with innumerable Christian saints, who in their day looked, and still look for his

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coming in glory, — lastly, of the Lord Jesus Christ himself, God blessed for ever, who, on the evening of His Agony, sang in company with his disciples. From this great company, not the humblest Christian is excluded, not even a child who may not obtain admission.

Q. But may it not be objected against these motives, that the cultivation of such a talent, considering the present state of society, opens too great a door to dissipation, and is attended with the risk of leading its possessor into harm's way and temptation?

A. If there be a right and a blessed use of music and song, it is no reason that this should be foregone, because of the possibility or danger there may be of a bad or corrupt use. There is no faculty which may not be applied to a corrupt use, or which the devil is not ever on the watch to pervert if he can. Besides, if the possession of a faculty necessarily implied its falling into the hands and direction of the devil, Christ could not have the kingdom which he really has upon earth; the devil would be stronger than Christ.

Q. However, have not many sensible persons, after considering all the circumstances of the case, thought it wiser to forego the acquirement altogether, rather than incur the risk of its attendant dangers?

A. Some perhaps may have done so. But where they have so thought, it is not difficult to

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see that they may have perceived too clearly the attendant dangers, and not have sufficiently considered the power of God to protect his own gifts from the craft of the tempter. In the kingdom of Christ, those who put their trust in God, and take heed to walk in his ways, can most certainly safely cultivate whatever gifts God may please to give them, without any danger of their misuse, as a matter of necessity.

Q. Still is it not true in matter of fact, that the devil does exercise a great power over the majority of musicians, and that he possesses a most widely spread influence by means of music ?

A. That the fact is so, there is too great reason to fear. The practice of music, as a profession, is generally found to lead to bad habits and company, and to be rarely united to chastity or regularity of life. Moreover, it would not be easy to estimate the influence Satan possesses, even in the Temple of God, by means of a music wholly unfit for the most Holy presence of the Blessed Sacrament, and for the minds of those who should be there engaged in earnest devotion. Also in the education of the young, it is a known fact, that mothers the most scrupulous in removing books which they judge to be dangerous out of the reach of their daughters, allow them the indiscriminate use of any music which comes in their way, as if music were incapable of containing contaminating sentiments in subtle concealment, or of giving to

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the opening character a form of evil which no subsequent care shall be able to correct. Yet to whatever extent Satan be thought to exercise an influence by means of music, the remedy notwithstanding does not lie in attempting to forbid or to root out its use. The true and only remedy lies in the labour to sanctify and render its use Christian, that it may become well-pleasing to God and the Angels, and a means of true and widely diffused human happiness.

Q. If then the true remedy lie in christianizing the use of music, is this remedy one within reach?

A. No religious habit or frame of mind grows of itself without considerable pains being taken to form and mature it. There is, then, not the smallest probability, that a people left to themselves will, of their own accord, adopt the Christian use of music.

Q. May it not then be a romantic idea to attempt to contradict a popular taste, and to teach people to love a strange kind of music, under the idea of its being Christian?

A. Not more romantic than to set about teaching them a thing not less strange in its way, viz., PRAYER. Moreover, a Christian people have necessarily strong religious instincts, the nature of which is to single out and love the devotional unearthly sounds of religious music.

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Q. But how are the people to obtain a knowledge of, or even to hear true religious music?

A. Jesus Christ has left behind Him the overseers of His Church, Bishops, Priests, and other officers for the discharge of every necessary duty in His kingdom. To them then belongs the duty of providing true Christian Music for His sanctuaries, that the people may hear it, and bless God and His Christ for it, as also to use the authority He has given them, to conform the taste of the people to the true Christian rule.

Q. If then it be the duty of the Christian Clergy, and generally of all engaged in the Christian instruction of the people, to form their taste to a Christian rule, this surely supposes the existence of some positive rule?

A. Undoubtedly it does.

Q. But it may be said, The capacity of musical sound has no limit. It appears to possess aptitude for the depths of hell, as well as the heights of heaven; so that there may be infinite degrees of near approach to or wide departure from the particular standard, which is the test of Christian music. It may be asked, then, considering the immense region of music, how there can be any other standard except an ideal standard?

A. The Church of Christ was instituted to teach and to bless the multitudes, to whom an ideal standard in music, or in anything else, is *total nonsense.* Since, then, the Church has known

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it to be the will of God, that the multitudes should hear and learn the Song of Saints in this life, she gave them not an ideal standard, but her own Song Books, collected and arranged by her Popes and wise men, containing saintly melodies, some preserved by tradition from the earliest ages, and formed into an annually recurring order, that the Church on earth might in her praises imitate the daily song of the morning stars; and, as the sun, rejoice to run her yearly course.

Q. In what form are these found?

A. In two chief collections: the Graduale, which contains all that belongs to the Song of the Mass; the Antiphonarium, containing all that belongs to the singing of the Canonical Hours, and other offices. Partial selections from which, fitted for popular use, and in a separate form, exist in great number, such as the Vesperale, the Processionale, Rituale, &c.

Q. What is the precise authority that these collections have?

A. The parallel is not to be rigidly drawn between them and the Canonical Scriptures, that the Church Song Books should be in Music what these are in Doctrine, viz., That to which no man may add to or take therefrom without incurring a curse. The Church has at no time imposed the use of her books of Song under pain of an anathema; on the contrary, considerable local variety in the use of music has been permitted, provided

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always that such use, whatever it might be, were established by the proper local authority. Whatever then may be the particular authorized song books, whether the Roman use, as the one which alone can be justly called the Catholic use, or other local uses, they are to be regarded as authoritatively declared by the Church to be those genuine Songs of the Saints, the use of which will be followed by blessings such as God will give to no other music, notwithstanding anything to the contrary that individuals may think of the superiority of other music in point of beauty and artificial perfection.

Q. Then if so, of what character will be the act of putting aside the particular Song books so authorized, and choosing others, thought to be more agreeable, in their place?

A. It is never possible to determine the character of an individual act, without a knowledge of its circumstances. But viewed apart from any particular circumstances, and duly considering the express will of God, that the Song of the Saints should be used; it is undoubtedly the act of a heretic in principle, when the Church has formally declared herself, and put forth certain songs, as the songs of the Saints, for an individual to take no account of her judgment, but to proceed to make his own choice, as if no such judgment existed.

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Q. But where there is liberty, how can there be any room for the principle of heresy?

A. The use of song in divine worship, cannot be a matter of absolute liberty, any more than it cannot be, like the matter of the Sacraments, absolutely fixed. Cardinal Cajetanus, (Com. in St. Thom.) is of opinion, that some music is so unfit to be offered to God, that nothing but invincible ignorance can excuse the person offering it from mortal sin. This opinion has for foundation, first, The divine law requiring *fitness* in the offerings made in worship, (Prophet Malachi); and, 2ndly, The known capacity of music to furnish every degree of fitness and unfitness. The point required in practice, then, is to determine in the particular case between *what is fit* and *what is unfit*, and for this *legitimate authority* is necessary.

Take a parallel case: the exposition of the relics of Saints to the veneration of the faithful, is a practice of the Church. Now it is certain, that many a man and woman have died in sanctity, who have not been declared Saints by the Church; yet what would be thought of a Priest who should expose to public veneration the relics of any person whom *he* judged to be a Saint, the Church being silent? He might be perfectly right, the person in question might have died a Saint; yet of what nature would be the act?—Clearly, the act of a heretic in principle. The Priest

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exposes himself on the sole warrant of *his own judgment, or that of others like himself*, to the danger of a crime, viz. the deceiving the people by false relics. To this, the act of choosing music for divine worship, respecting the fitness of which *the Church* is silent, is not far from parallel. The person who does it, has nothing better than the *warrant* of his own judgment, or that of persons like himself, to certify him that the music so chosen is not offensive to Almighty God, and a hindrance to the devotion of the people.

Q. But since the Church put forth her authorized books of Song, the whole face of the matter has been changed by the introduction of a new, and then unknown element, into music, namely, the resources and power of harmony.

A. No. The will of God, that the songs of the Saints should be those used in His Church, has not changed, and is incapable of change. Though it should then be conceded, that the element of harmony is capable of supplying the matter of the songs of the Saints, a question of which, whatever be its probability, there is, as yet, no clearly authoritative decision—there still remains the difficulty, that up to the present time, the Church has put forth no authorized use in harmony as her standard. For example, to put the question practically: Suppose the Curate of a church, to whom it is a sacred principle of duty to admit nothing into the sanctuary, of which he

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is the steward, except the song of the Saints, that is, music marked by the Church as genuine, put forth with her own authorized mark, as true Christian music, fit to be offered to Almighty God. Suppose him to say, I am very willing to allow this or that peice of harmony, when you can show me the *mark* of its being Christian. It is doubtful whether a case could be fairly made out in favour of a single composition in harmony—not to mention the entire absence of any authority for its being adapted to the particular occasion, even when proved to be Christian.

Q. Does any consequence result from the fact being thus?

A. Yes: In the kingdom of Christ, the God of order, it is plainly repugnant to His will, that individual taste should be needlessly entrusted with the power to dictate. The Church ever considers her own Rule far more merciful to her subjects, than their subjection to the discretion of her individual servants; it follows, then, that in the absence of an authorized use in harmonized music, that Plain Song, as being the use of the Church, were there no other reason, claims the preference from all her orderly and affectionate children.

Q. But considering the wonderful beauty and power of harmony, can it be possibly thought in accordance with the will of God, that Christian

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people should be deprived of the edification it is so well calculated to convey?

A. It is nonsense to talk of the edifying power of harmony in the abstract, so long as there is no better rule to preside over its use in the particular case, than individual taste. When the Church has provided an authorized use, all difficulty will be at an end; but for the present, were all the supposed defects attributed to the Plain Song real, and the alleged superiority of harmony certain, the mere fact of Plain Song being the authorized use of the Church, would alone make it an infinitely greater blessing to the people, than any possible beauty or power of harmony under the direction of individual taste.

Q. But the Church may be upon the point of providing a harmonized use, and in the mean time a sufficiently good choice may be made by individual judgment.

A. In the first place, it is not safe to reckon upon measures which the Church is thought to be about to take. And in the second place, there may be many good reasons for there being no likelihood that the Church will ever establish such a use.

Q. What can these reasons be?

A. Seven.

I. Vocal music in harmony is the song of artificial societies, i. e., companies composed of the proper proportion of bass, tenor, alto, and soprano voices. Is it to be conceived that the Church,

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whose vocation is with the multitude, should stop to legislate for associations so precarious?

II. The Ecclesiastical Song has in it the idea of a people's song, a song capable of subsisting by tradition among the people. How is the thought, then, to be entertained of an established Ecclesiastical use, in that, the execution of which an absence, from whatever cause, of a single singer, might on many occasions render ineffective, if not impossible.

III. The Church having distinctly and repeatedly both condemned and forbidden the singing of women in the capacity of public singers in the Church, it is difficult to conceive the establishment of a use necessarily attended with the temptation to employ women.

IV. Harmonies, after much repetition, experience shows to become wearisome to the ear, and to be unfit for constant use, yet repetition belongs to the very essence of an established use.

V. The essential character of an Ecclesiastical Song requires, according to the Apostle's rule, (Cor. xiv. 15.) that it should intelligibly express and convey some real sentiment, by speaking to the sober understanding. It is undeniable that vocal music in harmony rather disguises than conveys the meaning of the words sung, and in no sense fulfils the Apostle's requirement, of speaking to the understanding of the people.

Hence, the opinion expressed by a certain

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Cardinal, Capranica, that a company of musicians, singing in figured music, was to be compared to a sack full of little pigs, who might, indeed, make a considerable noise, but could not make any one the wiser.

VI. The Church, in her Plain Song, has adhered to the old scales of music, as used among the nations from time immemorial, and it is a reasonable opinion, that for the peculiar purposes of an Ecclesiastical Song, these scales, by their number and peculiar character, afford more scope and variety for the expression which the Church needs in her song, than the art of harmony, that confines itself to the use of two. While on the other hand, the resources peculiar to harmony, can be reasonably considered, either too full of intricacy to be practicable on any great scale, or too luxurious and too little penitential to be generally good, or too delicate to be popularly appreciated, or to depend upon means of execution too precarious to be generally serviceable, and, on the whole, to be rather proper to some other world, and not to the CHRISTIAN kingdom, passing over this dangerous existence to its own home in the world to come.

VII. When the Church collected and framed her annual order of Plain Song, she must needs be supposed, not only to have had her own definite and wise end in view, but also, by her divinely given wisdom, to have framed her work

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in the best manner for the attainment of her end. That end has been, not the creation of mere beauty in sound, but the providing a fallen and redeemed race with an annual order of Song, with which they might daily approach the Divine Presence, and celebrate the mercy of their redemption, in a manner suited to their life, which is one of daily transgression, and which retains the Divine favour only in virtue of an atoning sacrifice daily offered.

Whether, then, of the two things is most conceivable:

I. That an annual order thus fitted by the Church's divine wisdom to so needful an end, which has been the daily song of so many Saints in the house of their pilgrimage, during so many centuries, the need for which must remain to the last day of the Church's continuance upon earth, and the incessant use of which, by her families who have bid adieu to this world, is her great glory and distinguishing note to surrounding kingdoms — that this wonderful work, on the completion of which, the prayers, the fasts and watchings of so many of her greatest saints have been spent—should give way to the incoming of a new element on the art of sound.

Or, II. That there exist sufficient reasons for thinking, that notwithstanding its peculiar beauties, harmony has been, in the Divine wisdom,

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judged unsuited to the purposes and warfare of the Christian kingdom.

Q. But is it not certain that no Plain Song—but, on the contrary, harmony is sung in heaven?

A. A fact of this kind is very easy to assert; yet, could it be said with ever so much truth, it ought also to be remembered that the angels in heaven are not bound to the annual confession of their sins, that they have no need to sing penitential psalms, or lamentations, as those of the Holy Week. But, as such is the condition of men on earth, plain song may, notwithstanding, be the best fitted for them.

However, as to the fact of the Plain Song not being sung in heaven, with the inference implied, that it is much too rude and barbarous to be admitted there, how stands the little evidence there is? In (Rev. xv. 2.) the prophet saw in a vision, Saints who had overcome on earth, standing with harps in their hands, on a sea of glass before the Tabernacle of the Testimony, singing the song of Moses, the servant of God. Now, this song at that time, as both before and since, was one well known to the Church, as sung in Plain Song, and so sung from the day on which it was first written. What then, is more conceivable, than that they to whom it had become endeared in the form of Plain Song, in the day of their weariness and battle upon earth, should remember in the hour of their triumph, the song of

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their suffering and warfare, and with their harps in their hands, sing in Plain tune before the Tabernacle in heaven, that same song of Moses, the servant of God, which they had so often sung in Plain tune, before the Tabernacle on earth.

Were this inconceivable, which it certainly is not, this fact at least remains true—that the chief authors and singers of the Plain Song upon earth, are among the Saints of the Church, who are known to be now in heaven, and to intercede for us; and that, on the other hand, the chief authors of harmony and figured music, are not only *unknown* to be in heaven, but in no few instances, to judge from their lives, are under considerable improbability of being ever admitted there.

Q. The science and the use of figured music has existed, together with Plain Song, for more than three hundred years.—Does not the experience, during this period of time, of such use as may have been made of both, furnish some sufficient comparative estimate of their respective value for the purposes of the Church?

A. It will be enough to state the fact—That, during the long period when the order of Plain Song was without a rival, the Church saw her Saints applying themselves with enthusiasm to its enlargement and perfection. Many authentic instances also are on record of its almost miraculous power over those who heard it. While, on the other hand, of those who have written remark-

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able pieces in harmony for the offices of the Church, not one has been placed in the calendar of Saints; and in the stead of testimonies to the Christian excellencies of this kind of music, the Church has seen her Saints and wise men rise up to complain of its riot and excess, and to make laws for its restraint and correction.

Q. But, notwithstanding, are not all musical men of one mind, in considering Plain Song to be comparatively barbarous?

A. When the opinion of musical men is contrary to that of Saints, it must go for nothing. Moreover, it is no true reproach to the Plain Song, that worldly musicians should consider it barbarous. The fact of their doing so rather shows how true a reflection it is of Him of whom the prophet said, "Non est ei species neque decor, et vidimus Eum et non erat aspectus."—(Isaiah liii.) Besides, it is not true that all musicians are of this mind.

A recent musician of Rome, (Baini. Mem. ii., page 81, &c.,) speaks as follows: "Musicians may oppose and contradict what I say, as they please, they have full liberty. But I am not afraid to assert that the ancient melodies of the Gregorian Chant are inimitable. They may be copied, adapted to other words, Heaven knows how; but to make new ones equal to the first, that will never be done." Then he adds: "I need not say how many of these melodies owed their origin to Saint Damasus, St. Gelasius, and above all to

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St. Gregory the Great, all three illustrious pontiffs, who were divinely enlightened in their work. I need not say that others came from men not less eminent for their sanctity and knowledge, monks who lived in the 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th centuries. How did they set about to compose their songs? They prepared themselves by prayer and abstinence; they studied the nature and character of the words, and fitted them to the circumstances in which they were to be sung."

Q. But is not the Plain Song felt to be a weariness, from its joyless and mournful character?

A. There neither is or can be any real religious joy which is not built upon penitence. As then there is generally no penitence in the figured music which passes as sacred, so there can be no true joy in it. The Church, as a mother, it is true, is full of tenderness even for the tastes of her children, and could never be supposed to wish to force upon them a thing they could reasonably abhor. Yet is it conceivable, that the Christian people—they whose instincts and tastes, by reason of the Spirit that is poured out upon them, are necessarily Christian—they who eagerly followed the person, and gladly heard the words of Christ, till perverted and estranged by others, should not now, if they followed their own instincts, love and gladly hear the song of His Saints? It is surely the voice of the world, not the true expression of

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the mind of a Christian people, that finds the song of the Saints a weariness!

Q. But still, how can it be expected that the Plain Song can ever be popular, now, that the incomparably greater beauty of a harmonized song is generally known?

A. A poor bruised ill-treated man, bleeding upon a cross, is very far from a naturally beautiful sight; yet, Jesus Christ selected this very sight for exhibition to a sensual world, in order by it to draw all men unto Himself. There may, then, be popularity without beauty, and beauty is not indispensable to gaining the favour, at least, of Christian people. Again, miraculous images and the relics of Saints, are not in anywise remarkable for their beauty; yet, notwithstanding, are objects of popular veneration. So with the music of the Cross, the Plain Song of the Saints. It is quite possible for people of the world to say, "Here is no beauty that we should desire it." But it is also equally possible for a Christian people to feel that it can inspire prayer and devotion—that it can draw tears of grief and compunction from a burdened heart—that it can soothe and calm disturbed passions—that it can comfort grief—relieve despondency—clear away depression—speak of hope and love, leading the mind back to the scene round the cross, where the dying Redeemer commended his blessed Mother to the care of his beloved disciple — and that it can

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inspire those joys and hopes that are but counterfeit and to no purpose, except they come forth from penitence and suffering. Though, then, devoid of beauty to the sensual ear, the Plain Song may, notwithstanding, be an essentially popular Christian song—indeed, the only really popular Christian song.

Q. But does not the use of a harmonized song teach an instructive typical truth, "Diversity in unity," "the plurality of members, and the unity of the body," a beautiful lesson which is lost in the plain song?

A. It may be possible to purchase a beautiful typical truth too dear. And, besides, more of typical truth may be expressed in the unisonous voice of Plain Song. The glorious type in nature of the Church's song, the unwearied and never-failing song of generations and ages, is the roar of the sea, whose waves beat in unison on the shore. Again, what is a more precious practical truth than Unity, the "Communio Sanctorum?" and how can there be on earth a more perfect typical expression of this, than the vast unisonous song of a multitude, who, with *one mouth* and *one heart*, glorify their God and their Redeemer—where the voices of all, young men and maidens, old men and children, are, as it were, the voice of one person—where "Juvenes et virgines, senes cum junioribus laudant nomen Domini?" (*Ps.* cxlviii.)

Q. The devil has been said to exercise a wonder-

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ful influence by means of music. If then the Church's Plain Song be worthily recommended as the best matter for Christian study in music, is it more exempt from diabolic temptation than any other?

A. The cultivation of no natural gift is exempt from temptation. The devil made use of the Psalter itself, in the temptation of the Lord Jesus Christ. Plain Song, then, is not, and cannot be altogether exempt from danger in its cultivation; but it is natural to believe, and experience warrants the belief, that the Song of the Saints will be no easy matter for the tempter to pervert, if it be but undertaken with any fair measure of prudence and piety.

Q. The Church, then, it would seem, desires to put the Psalter together with her own Psalmody of Plain Song into the hands of the people, as the matter best fitted for a Christian learner; she must then have reasons for so doing?

A. Two reasons.

I. She knows the insidious evils that lie concealed in the art of music; she understands the force of Solomon's saying, "Non saturatur oculus visu, nec auris auditu impletur;" The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing, *Eccles.* i. 8. She has seen in so many instances an appetite for variety, begin by feeling the limits of innocence a constraint—at last, when these have been passed, and the whole round of

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vicious stimulants has been tried and thrown aside in disgust, come to be reduced to the helpless wretchedness that necessarily follows indulgence in vice, verifying the prophet's words: Et multiplicasti fornicationem tuam in terra Chanaan cum Chaldæis, et nec *sic* es satiata, (*Ezechiel* xvi. 28.) Knowing therefore the powerlessness of all but her own divine Psalmody to *satisfy*, in calling her children to the study of music, she will not leave them to themselves. But if they, for their part, although what she offers them has satisfied her own saints, prophets, and wise men, are yet not satisfied, but think they know better—her reasons still remain.

She has so keen a sense of the blessings of her own Psalmody of Plain Song, that she cannot be indifferent upon the question of its use. Of this a specimen of the voice of her doctors, taken respectively from the extreme east and west, may serve to convey an idea.

St. Basil, Archbishop of Cæsarea, in his Homily on the first Psalm:

"Psalmody is the calm of the soul, the umpire of peace, that sets at rest the storm and upheaving of the thoughts. Psalmody quiets the turbulence of the mind, tempers its excess, is the bond of friendship, the union of the separated, the reconciler of those at variance; for who can count him any longer an enemy with whom he has but once lifted up his voice to God? Psalmody putteth evil spirits to flight, calleth for the help of angels, is a defence from terrors by night, a rest from troubles by day, is the safety of children, the glory of young men, the comfort of the old, the fairest

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ornament of women. Psalmody peoples the waste, sobers the market-place, is the milk of learners, the food of the more advanced, the sustenance of the perfected, the voice of the Church. Psalmody is that which gives dignity to festivals, and leads the way to repentance. Psalmody calls forth a tear from a heart of stone, is the work of angels, the government of heaven, the incense of the Spirit. O wonderful wisdom of the Teacher! who hath contrived that we should both sing, and therewith learn that which is good, by which means sound doctrine is the more firmly fixed in the mind: for hard precepts are apt to be let slip; but such as find an entrance with grace and pleasantness, are more likely to remain. What cannot Psalmody teach! It teaches the glory of courage, the openness of justice, the grace of soberness, the perfection of prudence, the manner of repentance, the measure of patience. What is there of good that cannot be learned from it? Here is the sum of all theology, the prophetic history of Christ's sojourn in the flesh, the threat of judgment, the hope of resurrection, the fear of punishment, the promises of glory, the revelation of mysteries. All these, as in one common treasure-house, are stored up in the book of Psalms."—*(St. Basil, Homily on Ps.* i.*)*

St. Ambrose, Archbishop of Milan, in the west, in the preface to his Commentary on the Book of Psalms, speaks as follows:

"In the book of Psalms there is something profitable for all; it is a sort of universal medicine, and preservative of health. Whoever will read therein may be sure to find the proper remedy for the diseased passion he suffers from. Psalmody is the blessing of the people, a thanksgiving of the multitude, the delight of numbers, and a language for all. It is the voice of the Church, the sweetly loud profession of faith, the full voiced worship of men in power, the delight of the free, the shout of the joyous, the exultation of the merry. It is the soother of anger, the chaser away of sorrow, the comforter of grief. It is a defence by night, an ornament by day a shield in danger a strong

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tower of sanctity, an image of tranquillity, a pledge of peace and concord forming its unity of song, as the Lyre, from diversity of sound. The morning echoes to the sound of Psalmody, and the evening re-echoes. The Apostle commanded women to be silent in the Church, yet the song of Psalmody becomes them. (St. Ambrose is speaking of congregational Psalmody.) Boys and young men may sing Psalms without danger, and even young women also without detriment to their matronly reserve. They are the food of childhood, and infancy itself that will learn nothing besides delights in them. Psalmody befits the rank of the king, may be sung by magistrates, and chorussed by the people, each one vying with his neighbour in causing that to be heard which is good for all."—*Præfatio in Comment. in Lib. Psalmorum.*

Such are specimens of the language in which two doctors and theologians of the Church of the fourth century can speak of the Plain Song. It will not be uninstructive to contrast with this the language of a theologian of the eighteenth century, Abbot Martin Gerbert, speaking of figured music, as follows:

"From whence it has come to pass, (viz., from the multitude of musical practitioners,) that compositions of all kinds, through the ignorance and conceit of these performers, have become more and more depraved, and the divine worship more and more profaned, so as that the music of almost any but the smallest theatres, is better than in numbers of Churches which have disdained the simple song that was the one great glory of the Church in her prosperous days."—*Martinus Gerbert, vol.* ii, *page* 375, *de Musicâ Sacrâ.*

And presently he proceeds to remark, still speaking of the figured music:

"That not having dared to enter the Church for more

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than a thousand years, and then insinuating itself by slow degrees, it has now in a manner overwhelmed every sacred office with its clamour, stunning the ears, distracting and drawing all minds to itself, away from the recollection and thought of God, proper to prayer and Divine worship."

Q. If the blessings, then, of true Divine Psalmody are so great, does it not become a duty to renounce all other use of music?

A. No. "Omnia tempus habent, et suis spatiis transeunt universa sub cœlo," &c. *To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven. A time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance.* (Ecclesiast. iii. 1.) The whole of life is not required to be spent in acts of praise; and nothing is more allowable than innocent recreation in its season.

Q. But if the renunciation be not required, is it not at least to be counselled?

A. To renounce the allowable enjoyments of God's free gifts requires a special vocation; without such a Divine call, it would be presumptuous to make the attempt. All that God seems to require is, that the proper time and place be observed, and that care be taken, that the mouth which sings His praises, should never be defiled with the song of fools. Numquid fons de eodem foramine emanat dulcem et amaram aquam. (S. James, iii. 11.) Can a fountain send forth bitter water and sweet?

Q. How may proper care be taken?

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A. By avoiding bad company, and by making a rule never to sing any song upon which you would be ashamed to ask the blessing of God. If, in addition to this, the opinion of a sober friend, your Pastor, for example, be asked from time to time, there will be little danger of your going far astray.

Q. If the Church's Plain Song be a people's song, ought not the people to be exhorted to sing it?

A. Few things, the adorable sacrifice itself excepted, can be more pleasing to Almighty God, and nothing can be more soul inspiring, or speak more to the feelings, than the devout song of a Christian multitude—it is a foretaste of the unity and happiness of Heaven; but before a people can sing congregationally, they must have acquired some little skill. The Apostle's rule, that all things be done to edifying, in decency and order, (1 Cor. xiv. 40.) is perhaps in nothing more necessary to be remembered than in the attempt to induce a congregation to sing.

Q. If it be the will of God that no talent remain idle, but be employed with diligence and wisdom, can any short pieces of advice be given to those who have been gifted with a musical talent, to direct them in the use of it?

A. Seven:

I. Consider that it cannot be for nothing that you have received a great talent, that you must give an account of its use.

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II. Consider that there are two uses, a wise and a foolish one; and think of the saying of Peraldus, a Dominican friar of the 13th century, viz. "that as the sons of God, practised in the work of Divine praise, learn on the earth Psalms which hereafter they will sing in Heaven, so the children of the devil learn in the world songs, that by-and-bye they shall sing in hell."

III. Consider, if you dislike what you think to be the mortified, solemn, and joyless character of the Plain Song—that life is short, that pleasantness is not the best Christian rule, that the greatest Saints have found their chief delight in it, and that you yourself may be entirely mistaken.

IV. If you are determined to choose something else, because it is more to your mind, and in comparison appears pleasant to the sense, and sweet to the taste,—consider that it was the appetite for a fruit, that looked pleasant to the eye, sweet to the taste, and a thing to be desired to make one wise, that brought sin into this world, and by sin death.

V. Consider, that if you endeavour to love and to apply yourself to the Church's Plain Song, you will have great Saints of the Church for the companions of your labour, and intercessors with God for your success and reward. On the other hand, meditate much on the fact: that out of the numbers who have a special reputation in the world, as having been authors and singers of figured

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music, not one is accounted a saint by the Church.

VI. Meditate upon the fact, that the Church's rule of Plain Song for the many hundred years that it has formally existed as her rule, has had and still has her sanction, as being the Use best fitted to fulfil the end she proposes to herself by the use of Psalmody: and that most probably the Church is wiser than you.

VII. Lastly, consider, that if you will be always ready to use your talent cheerfully to the advancement of religion and virtue, in whatever way your legitimate superior may point out to you, you may be sure you will in no wise lose your reward.



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CHAPTER II.

OF THE CONTENTS OF THE PSALTER.

Q. Is there any special testimony that the Psalms of the Psalter are inspired by the Holy Spirit?

A. The prophet David himself testifies that they are so. (2 *Samuel*, xxiii. 21.) "Spiritus Domini locutus est per me et sermo ejus per linguam meam."—The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was upon my tongue.

Q. Can any correct summary or statement be given of the principal contents of the Psalter?

A. Like all the other works of God, the Psalter is exceedingly rich and manifold in its contents. Indeed, each separate Psalm by itself is so manifold, that it is wholly impossible to give any absolute statement of the contents of the whole Psalter.

Q. Can any tolerable idea or account be given of its contents?

A. As the harp of David had ten strings, the Psalter may be said to contain ten classes of Psalms.

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I. Acts of the Soul.
II. Prayers.
III. Thanksgivings.
IV. Lamentations.
V. Praise.
VI. Protestations.
VII. Descriptive Psalms.
VIII. Moral Psalms.
IX. Historical Psalms.
X. Prophetic Psalms.

CLASS I.—Acts of the Soul.

I. Addressed to Almighty God.
II. In a state of suffering.
III. In a state of joy.

1.—Acts of the soul addressed to Almighty God.

I. Of Faith.
II. Of Hope.
III. Of Love.
IV. Of Contrition.
V. Of Humility.

2.—Acts of the soul in a state of suffering—arising from,

I. Conscience of guilt and sin.
II. Hatred and persecution from enemies, and the presence of the wicked.
III. From the thought of being abandoned by God.
IV. From bodily pain.
V. From thoughts and dread of the approach of death
VI. From thoughts of the awfulness of Almighty God.
VII. From terror at the wonders of the judgment to come.

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3—Acts of the soul in a state of joy, arising

I. From the presence, or the remembrance, of the worship and praise of God
II. From actual deliverance.
III. From the taste of the mercy and forgiveness of God.
IV. From the sense of God's fatherly care and protection.
V. From viewing the glorious works of God.
VI. From the hope of victory, and the speedy confusion of enemies.
VII. From the hope of awaking to see the beatific vision of God.

CLASS II.—PRAYERS,

I. For mercy, help, protection, and consolation from God.
II. For patience, and grace, to put trust in God.
III. For the grace of repentance, the pardon of sin, and to intreat the putting away of God's wrath.
IV. Prayers of intercession for others.
V. For the coming of the great day of salvation.
VI. For grace to persevere to love God and his commandments.
VII. That God would arise, and manifest his power.
VIII. For vengeance and recompense upon the wicked, and deliverance from them.
IX. Intreating to be heard of God.
X. For a blessing upon the sanctuary, for liberty to frequent it, and for the peace of the Church.

CLASS III.—THANKSGIVINGS,

I. For prayers that have been heard.
II. For forgiveness of sins.
III. For the great works of God.
IV. For deliverance and protection.
V. For the fatherly care, and over-ruling providence of God.
VI. For his judgments upon the wicked.

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VII. For the consolations of his testimonies, for the Holy Scripture, and for the gift of the Holy Sacrament.

CLASS IV.—Lamentations,

I. Upon the chastisements of the Church.
II. Upon the desolations of this present life.
III. Upon the seeming triumph of bad men, and the still silence of Almighty God.
IV. Upon the multitude of ungodliness, and of wicked men in the world.
V. Upon the desolations of the sanctuary, and of the Holy Place.

CLASS V.—Praise of God.

I. For his mercy, protection, and fatherly correction.
II. For his judgments upon the wicked.
III. For the glories, and the beauties, of his creation.
IV. For his righteousness, eternity, and the excellence of his statutes and ordinances.
V. For the mercy and the goodness of his government.
VI. For all his mighty works written in the Scriptures.
VII. For the wonders of his redemption to come.

CLASS VI.—Protestations

I. On the part of Almighty God.
II. On the part of the Psalmist.

1.—On the part of Almighty God.

I. Of willingness to give help.
II. To the wicked, to beware.
III. To his people, to call his benefits to their mind.
IV. To his people, an admonition to live righteously.
V. Of his promise to reward those who do good.
VI. Of his promise to punish those who do evil.
VII. Of his being grieved and wearied with the sins of his people.

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2.—On the part of the Psalmist.

I. Of love to God, and care to obey his law.
II. Of trust in God.
III. Of his consciousness of the power of God, to protect, and to punish.
IV. Remonstrance with the wicked
V. Of his hatred of the wicked.
VI. Of his love for the worship and praise of God.
VII. Of his love for the Church, the altar, and the sanctuary.

CLASS VII.—DESCRIPTIVE.

I. Of the various works of the creation, in the heavens and the earth.
II. Of the life, character, and reign of CHRIST.
III. Of the characteristics, the power, and career of the Church.

CLASS VIII.—MORAL.

{ I. Teaching.
{ II. Exhorting.

1.—Teaching.

I. The real misery of bad men, notwithstanding their prosperity.
II. The happiness of good men, and the blessedness of virtue.
III. The vanity and shortness of life, and the necessity of making use of time.
IV. The duty and the benefit of avoiding all bad company, and all wicked doings.
V. The benefits and wisdom of trusting in God.
VI. The benefits and wisdom of being diligent in doing good works.
VII. The benefits and wisdom of cultivating inward graces.

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2.—Exhorting.

I. To keep from evil.
II. To fear God.
II. To live in innocence, and in good works.
IV. To praise and worship God.
V. To have patience.
VI. To put trust in God.
VII. To love God, and to draw near to his service.

CLASS IX.—HISTORICAL.

CLASS X.—PROPHETIC.

I. Of the life, reign, sufferings, and works of Jesus Christ.
II. Of the career, warfare, and extension of the Church.
III. Of her sufferings from the wicked, and her punishments for her sins.
IV. Of her final salvation and deliverance.
V. Of the punishment of the wicked in this life, and in the next.
VI. Of the reward of the righteous in this life, and in the next.
VII. Of the coming of the kingdom of Christ, and of his saints, of which there shall be no end.

Q. Does every one of these subjects form the burden of one or more separate Psalms?

A. It is only in a few instances that it may be said: This is specially a Psalm of thanksgiving, or, that is a Psalm of penitence; in general, the separate Psalms almost vie with the whole Psalter in the multitude and richness of their contents.

Q. Has the Psalter ever been divided into separate portions?

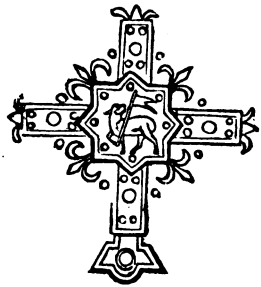
A. A division in five parts, answering to the

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five books of Moses, was known to the Jews. The separate portions most known to Christians, are those of the fifteen Gradual Psalms, *i.e.* the fifteen which follow in order after the 118th Psalm, the Seven Penitential Psalms, and seven Psalms of Thanksgiving. The 118th Psalm may also be regarded, as in some respects, a separate portion of the Psalter.

The Seven Penitential Psalms are, vi., xxxi. xxxvii., l., ci., cxxxix., cxlii.

Seven Psalms of Thanksgiving are, xcv., xcix., cii., cxvi., cxlviii. cxlix., cl.



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CHAPTER III.

OF THE PSALTER AS SPEAKING IN THE PERSON OF

I. David, King of Israel.
II. Jesus Christ.
III. The Church militant.
IV. A Christian Soul.

Q. You said that the Psalter was distinct from the other books of Scripture, in being a volume or collection of Songs. Is it not also a book to be understood with understanding?

A. Yes: St. Paul distinctly says, (1 Cor. xiv. 15.) I will sing psalms (ψαλω) with the spirit; that is, that he would give his whole soul and spirit to the melody—and I will sing psalms with *the understanding also.* The Book of Psalms, therefore, in the judgment of St. Paul, requires the full use of the understanding, though it be also fitted to be sung.

Q. How may a sound understanding of the Psalter be best acquired?

A. The rules to be given for acquiring a Christian understanding of the Psalter, are not different from those which apply to other parts of the Scripture.

I. "He that doeth my will shall know of my doctrine," said our Lord, (*St. John,* vii. 17.) It is absolutely needful that the heart be conformable to the

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will of God, and that the will be already advanced in the path of subjection to God's commands, by dutiful and loving obedience to them, before there can be any hope of attaining a saving or profitable knowledge of any part of God's word. A very considerable intellectual knowledge of the revealed word of God may indeed be obtained by those who live in disobedience; but this knowledge is not to be desired, for it only brings the greater condemnation with it, so long as it is held in unrighteousness.

II. That admission to a saving knowledge of the mysteries, written in the Holy Scriptures, is the reward of those who have been good stewards of the grace of God, and who, by that grace, have laboured to purify themselves.

III. That the understanding, without the light of the Holy Spirit of God, cannot comprehend the great truths of God's word; that is, cannot find out God by searching. (*Job*, xi. 7, 8.)

IV. That the "Holy Spirit will not dwell in the body that is subject to sin," (Sapient. i. 4.) hence, the necessity of a holy life, as the condition of obtaining true knowledge.

V. That *Charity*, and not knowledge, is the end of the commandment, and that it is possible to have all knowledge, and yet, for lack of charity, to be wholly without commendation in the sight of God.

Q. If purity of heart and mind be a condition

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of attaining Divine truth, can the understanding of the pure and humble minded hope to advance in the knowledge of Scripture without a guide?

A. No; a guide is still needful. When St. Philip, the Deacon, saw the Ethiopian eunuch in his chariot, reading the prophet Isaiah, he asked him, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" to which the Ethiopian answered, "How can I, except some one teach me?" A guide to the true meaning of the Psalter will be even more needed, from its peculiar character as a book of songs.

Q. Have much pains been taken to explain the Psalter?

A. No book of the Holy Scriptures has been so much studied and so learnedly expounded as the Psalter. Yet the true object to be sought for, would seem to be, how the Psalter, being a most merciful and blessed gift of God, we to whom it has been given, may best glorify the all-gracious Giver, by wisely applying it to the uses for which he gave it.

Q. What will best serve as a guide to the understanding, in learning the true Christian use of the Psalter?

A. To become learned in all the fulness of meaning contained in the book of Psalms, would be the work of many years, deep meditation, and careful thought; but, to gain a key to a profitable and practical use of the Psalms, it will be

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sufficient to understand who are the persons, who are the speakers in the different Psalms. This single key, which may be easily applied, will, for those who desire and love to meditate, be sufficient in practice, to open the Psalter to the understanding, and enable it to be used as a book of meditation, devotion, and Christian instruction.

Q. In the persons of whom, then, may the Psalter be understood to speak?

A. In four different persons.

I. In the person of David, king of Israel, or whoever may be the author of the Psalm in question.

II. In the person of Jesus Christ, the true King of Israel, of whose life, reign, and kingdom, the life, reign, and kingdom of David was a figure.

III. In the person of the Church, the Corpus Christi mysticum, or mystical body of Christ, now undergoing trial in the flesh, and advancing towards its future condition in the world to come.

IV. In the person of the individual Christian soul, also undergoing trial and temptation in the present world, and alternately expressing the hopes and fears, the joys and sorrows, and other feelings natural to her condition.

Q. Is it not difficult to believe that the Psalter speaks in the person of Jesus Christ?

A. No, not at all, if we believe that the Psalter was inspired by God the Holy Ghost, and remem-

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ber that Jesus Christ has testified that many things were spoken of him in the book of Psalms.

Q. Is it not difficult to believe that the Psalms speak in the person of the Church of Christ?

A. No; not if we remember what has been worked for all Christians who compose the Church by the Sacrament of baptism. How that in it, they who receive baptism become members of the body, the flesh, and the bones of Christ. (Ephes. v. 30.) The church of the faithful being thus made His mystical body, and having succeeded to that state of suffering upon earth, in which He once was, has also succeeded Him in becoming the speaker in those Psalms which express the acts of a human soul in her life upon earth. The Church herself also speaks in *one* person, as being what she is, *one whole body* in Christ Jesus. The same in substance, is true of each individual Christian soul.

Q. Is it most necessary to believe that the chief speakers in the Psalms are, Jesus Christ, the CHURCH, and the individual Christian soul?

A. This is that key of the true understanding of the Psalter, without which all right Christian use of it is at an end: for, unless we understand the Psalter to have spoken, as it were, the soul of Jesus CHRIST suffering in the flesh, and to be now speaking the soul of his mystical body, it is plain

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that all claim upon our devout use of it in our own sufferings is at an end also.

Q. May it not be objected that the Psalter speaks often openly in the Person of David, and not of Christ?

A. Jesus CHRIST not being come in the flesh when the Psalter was inspired, the Holy Ghost has used David as a figure of Him who was to come.

Q. But how does it come to pass, that the Psalter being written for Jews, and still used by them, can be profitably used by Christians, whose religion is wholly different?

A. The nature of true and acceptable worship, offered by man to God, being the same, whether in Jew or Gentile, whatsoever of true devotion is found in the Psalter is good for Christians, notwithstanding the Jewish dress in which it is found.

Q. But is it not a hindrance to the devout use of the Psalter, that there is so much mention of Jewish names and Jewish things in it?

A. The wisdom of God, which provided this book for the devotion of CHRISTIANS, did not see any force in such an objection, nor any unfitness in the Psalter on that account for CHRISTIAN USE. Rather the very fact of so much of that which seems to be merely Jewish, being found in it, is most instructive if rightly understood. A CHRISTIAN cannot forget that his Redeemer was not

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only the second Adam, by whom came life and resurrection, but the seed in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed, promised to Abraham the Hebrew Patriarch. Jesus CHRIST was then, not only *very man* in the truth of man's nature, but an *Israelite*, a Jew of the tribe of Judah, of the house and lineage of David, born of a pure and blessed Virgin, a Jewess.

Jesus Christ also was King of the Jews; and although the people of his own nation, for the most part, received Him not, He has taken to himself a people from among all the nations of the earth under the sun, who are now blessed in him, and has translated them into the kingdom and the promises, of which He died and rose again the King. Since, then, Jesus CHRIST was King of the Jews, and that *salvation is of the Jews*, (St. John iv. 22.) all that is so often said in the Psalter of the fortunes of the Jews among their enemies and neighbours, should be very dear to us for CHRIST'S sake, for *Christ* was a *Jew*, and if we be of CHRIST, we are ourselves, according to the Apostle's testimony, the seed of Abraham, (Gal. iii.)

Q. Are we then to understand, that there is an actual benefit to be derived from those portions of the Psalter that seem to be Jewish, and as such, to have no Christian meaning?

A. They serve to bring home to us a clear sense of the literal truth, that our Lord whom we worship was a *Jew*, a King of the Jews, and that

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He so truly loved His own people and kingdom, that God the Holy GHOST spake in songs of all that concerned his own kingdom and people; and though his own people did requite him by disowning and crucifying him, yet still he was and is their God and their King, and requires all those who believe upon him from among the Gentiles, to learn their songs, their history, and to be one with them in his kingdom.

So great a portion then, of the Psalter being Jewish, teaches us to bear in mind that our Lord was, and is a Jew; that we become in a manner the seed of Abraham, by becoming His in baptism; that we are ourselves engrafted into his kingdom, and are made inheritors in the salvation which is of the Jews.

Q. Is there any other profitable instruction in those parts of the Psalter which appear to be specially Jewish?

A. Yes: in the like manner as the Holy GHOST, under the figure of David, did foreshow CHRIST; so many other Christian mysteries are shown under other figures, also taken from the history of Judah, as shall be hereafter explained.

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CHAPTER IV.

OF THE PSALTER AS A MANUAL OF PRIVATE DEVOTION.

Q. What is the true Christian use that ought to be made of the Psalter?

A. I. As a book of private devotion and meditation, which was the use made of it by Jesus Christ.

II. As the chief public Song-book of the Church.

Q. How does it come to pass that the Psalter can be used as a manual of private prayer and meditation?

A. It was explained in the preceding chapter that the Psalter expresses the feelings of a human soul under the varying circumstances of general suffering and trial. On this account, then, nothing can be better fitted to be the companion of a Christian soul undergoing the trial that belongs to this life. But when it is further borne in mind that the language and feelings of the sufferer, there expressed, were inspired beforehand by the HOLY GHOST, as those of JESUS CHRIST, when he should come in the flesh: a manual of the thoughts, words, and acts of a soul thus sanctified, and made perfect in suffering, even the soul of the Lord JESUS CHRIST, cannot be else than the richest blessing that God could give

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to souls passing through the same scene of temptation; so that the question will not be of their suitableness for devotion, but whether they are not too exalted, too holy, for the condition of man.

Q. What then is our title to make use of the Psalter?

A. Our Baptism, whereby we have become very members of the mystical body of CHRIST, as also our admission to partake of His sacred body in the Eucharist. Those whom Jesus Christ has called to so blessed an union with himself, are admitted to the privilege of feeding their own souls with the words, thoughts, and breathings of His soul, during the days of His most sacred ministry and passion upon earth.

Q. The contents of the Psalter, it appears, are exceedingly diverse; it will then be probable, that those portions of it which refer to the sufferings of JESUS CHRIST, will also be various. If then a person desire to find a prayer or meditation upon any particular subject, how shall he know in what way, or where to discover it, in the midst of so much diversity?

A. It must be acknowledged, that the exceeding richness and variety—the manifoldness, so to speak, of the Psalms, is, and must always be, no little hindrance to the use of the entire Psalter in the hands of the unlearned. As a sick person is very little the better for having a vast variety of

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medicines offered to him, when he does not know how to select the particular one that would cure him, although he knows it to be among the number; so with the Psalter, the unlearned man may know generally, that it contains the depth of the soul of Jesus Christ in suffering, and yet be quite unable to choose out the particular portion, which is best fitted to soothe or quiet his own trouble, or be best adapted to his circumstances or condition.

Q. How may this difficulty be best remedied?

A. The difficulty is one incapable of being entirely remedied; yet, in some partial measure, it may be removed.

The first obvious plan, is to ask the aid of the priest, or some other person who may happen to have a tolerable knowledge of the Psalms.

Secondly, an inventory, or table of the contents of the Psalter, as that given in the Appendix, may be used with advantage.

Q. How may the table in question be used?

A. Suppose the case of a person cruelly abused and deceived by his intimate friend, who, in consequence, finds himself placed in a very uncomfortable position, exposed to continual harsh treatment, from all which he sees no immediate means of escape. Such a person, if he wished to solace himself with the Psalter, on referring to the inventory, would see among the Songs of Christ, three Psalms pointed out as complaining of the

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treachery of his familiar friend Juda; or if he were to refer to the table under the head of "Acts of a soul in suffering," he would find several Psalms pointed out as proper to distress, arising from persecution, or the presence of the wicked. Thus, in either case, something suited to his own need would be rendered accessible.

This is a mere illustration by means of an instance, to point out the use to which the table in question is adapted. It has been framed so as to correspond to the table of the contents of the Psalter, in chapter II. More is not meant, than that it is an attempt at a remedy for a difficulty, incapable, owing to the wonderful variety of the Psalms, of being completely removed.

Q. What are intended to be the chief benefits of the annexed table?

A. It is meant to assist in some partial manner to the use of the Psalter, in the way of inventory to the various rich treasures contained in it.

Q. Would not a good knowledge of the Psalter serve every purpose of such a table?

A. Every person has not that good knowledge, but even to those most familiar with the Psalter, the table may occasionally be of service, in assisting them to find any particular Psalm, or passage in the Psalter.

Q. Can any short directions be given how to make a devout use of the Psalter?

A. Two.

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I. To remember what has been said, that generally the chief speaker in the Psalter is Jesus Christ—this is needful to ensure reverence, solemnity, and devout attention. It being most probable, that whatever good affection of soul it be that we express by the words of the Psalter, it has been sanctified by having been that of Jesus Christ. This thought cannot fail to draw forth reverence and devotion in the heart of every good Christian.

II. That there be chosen a time and place proper to the particular use of the Psalter, whether prayer or meditation, which is about to be made. If any portion is about to be recited in the way of prayer, the Church, if possible, should be chosen. Also that fitting postures of body be observed as much as possible, remembering, that Jesus Christ kneeled down when he prayed.

Q. What are the chief benefits to be derived from the use of the Psalter in private devotion?

A. They are without number. But they may be all summed up in saying, that it is the most effectual way of becoming like Jesus Christ. For the Psalter is the transcript of the soul of Jesus Christ, both in sorrow and in joy. If, therefore, we devoutly use the Psalms of the Psalter, we may hope that, with the blessing of God, our souls will become like the soul of Jesus Christ.

Q. What has been said, applies to such portion of the Psalter as contains acts of devotion. Can

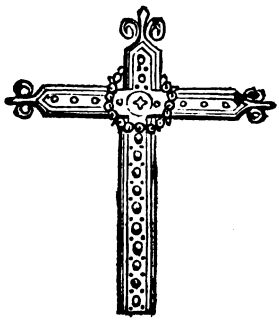
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any directions be given how to turn the remainder of the Psalter to good account, in any mode of private use?

A. Yes. Beatus vir qui non abiit in consiliis impiorum, &c. Sed in lege Domini voluntas ejus, et in lege ejus meditabitur die ac nocte. (*Psalm* i.) "Blessed is the man that hath not walked in the counsel of the ungodly. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law will he exercise himself day and night." The whole of the Psalter contains matter for meditation day and night. The devout Christian may, in it, find whereon to ponder upon the wonders of the government of Almighty God, over a sinful and disobedient creation; His long suffering of the wicked until their impenitence be filled up: His perfecting of the Saints by the trial of their patience and endurance; His fatherly correction of the erring and froward; His care for the weak and them that have wandered out of the way; His love for the Church and her dwellings; His promises of help and defence to the poor and needy, of guidance to the meek and gentle; His threats of desolation to the rich and proud, of fire and vengeance to the wicked, of curses upon the blasphemer, and a plenteous reward to every man according to his works. He may find whereon to meditate of the blessedness of serving God, of the misery of disobeying him, upon the wonders of the law of God which yet remain to be known,

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upon the fearful and marvellous work of the human soul, her strange perceptions of joy and sorrow, her singular dwelling in a tabernacle of flesh, her misery in sin, her happiness in innocence, her peace in the favour and love of God. In many such things as these, may the Christian find whereon to meditate in the Psalms day and night. In lege Domini voluntas ejus, et in lege ejus meditabitur die et nocte.



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CHAPTER V.

OF THE PSALTER, THE SONG-BOOK OF THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST.

Q. What is the next use for which Almighty God designed his gift of the Psalter?

A. He has designed and fitted it for the Song-Book of the Christian kingdom.

Q. In what manner did God intend it to be used as such?

A. God is the same to-day, yesterday, and for ever, and His designs are ever as He is himself, the same, without change. In the kingdom of ISRAEL, to whom the Psalter was first given, its use was, by the inspired kings David and Solomon, established as the Song Book of the temple, sung by Levites, who attended in their courses. When then it pleased God to enlarge His kingdom, and to take into it all the families of the earth, and that a "pure offering" (munda oblatio) should be offered to Him in every place, the solemn use of the Psalter, which hitherto by the express will of God had been confined to the single temple of Jerusalem, was now permitted after the same, or a similar pattern, to every corner of the whole earth.

Q. But then, when God designed the Psalter for solemn use, as a book of songs, He raised up

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two kings, who had great wealth, and could maintain singers, and build a temple. How could God design to extend a similar use of the Psalter all over the world, where there could not always be kings to establish its use in a similar manner?

A. Almighty God having decreed to set up the kingdom of Jesus Christ among the kingdoms of the earth, has been able to provide means, that the songs of His kingdom should be heard from the rising of the sun to its setting without the aid of kings.

Q. You speak of the songs of the *kingdom of Jesus Christ*, do you mean that His kingdom is one upon earth that can be seen and observed?

A. Jesus Christ, on ascending into Heaven, revealed to His disciples that all power was given to Him in heaven, and *on earth*, (St. Matth. xxviii.) To say, therefore, that He has no kingdom, is to deny His own words; and to say that He has a kingdom, but that it is an invisible one, is to use words without meaning, or rather with a very bad unbelieving meaning. For He Himself, Christ, the King of Israel, was a very and true Man, of the seed of Abraham, born of a pure Virgin, and He was openly showed to all men upon the Cross, as King of the Jews. If, therefore, all power be given to Him on *earth*, and He be a true King, it follows that His kingdom, being a true kingdom over men, must be one that can

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be seen with the eyes, be known by its kingly acts and deeds, be celebrated for its laws, observances, customs, ceremonies and possessions, and all other things that belong to the nature of a true and living kingdom over men, the king of which is a man after the truth of man's nature.

Q. You speak of the kingdom of JESUS CHRIST being visible upon earth, how is it visible?

A. Such is the surpassing blindness of the carnal mind to discern the tokens of the manifestations of CHRIST, that it is quite possible for a member of CHRIST'S kingdom to be asked such a question, and to need to be able to give a careful answer. He may say, then,

I. Let the exceeding blindness of our natural carnal mind be fairly considered, and let it be borne in mind that there are those of whom the prophet speaks: Behold, ye despisers, and wonder and perish; for I work a work in your days, which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you, (Acts, xiii. 40,) and it will then appear that it is possible for the unbeliever to be in the very midst of the tokens of CHRIST'S KINGDOM, and not to discern them, as Jacob on the morrow afterwards confessed, "the LORD was in this place, and I knew it not."

II. That seeing that the kingdom of Christ is one united kingdom spread over the greatest part of the earth, all parts of which cannot be seen or observed at once, and that its members in many

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places are living apparently mixed up with the multitude of other societies, its separate parts may often have very little to offer to strike the eye, and to make manifest the existence of the body to which they really belong.

III. That being however a true and visible kingdom, it puts visible tokens of its own existence before the eyes and understanding of observers; of which the following are among the chief.

1. The members and subjects of the kingdom are admitted into it by a visible rite, visibly administered, Baptism, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Next, besides other visible rites of less frequent occurrence, they may be observed frequently to continue their citizenship within the kingdom, by the partaking of another visible rite, also visibly administered, the Holy Sacrament of the Body and Blood of JESUS CHRIST the crucified King.

2. That being baptized the subjects of CHRIST'S kingdom, they are formed into a visible constitution or government called the CHURCH, under three orders of Pastors and Rulers, who are either the Bishops of a diocese, or the Priests and Deacons of parishes, yet are all united under the government of one supreme Head, the successor of St. Peter.

3. That within this government there are many visible marks of a true, real, and living kingdom, assemblies of the subjects round the

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throne and altar of the King in houses dedicated to His service, celebrations of His worship recurring in their due order, consisting of prayer and praise addressed to Him as *reigning*, the preaching of His WORD, *i. e.*, *the Gospel of His kingdom*, the expounding of His doctrine, the teaching of His law and will to His people, and many other similar tokens which might be named.

Q. Are these tokens sufficient proof of the reality of the kingdom of JESUS CHRIST upon earth?

A. Yes, to a believing mind they are quite sufficient; but an unbelieving mind cannot see or understand that they are tokens of the LORD.

Q. Of course national songs and national music belong to the truth of a living human kingdom?

A. Undoubtedly they do.

Q. Then ought not songs and the use of music to be among the visible tokens of the kingdom of JESUS CHRIST?

A. Certainly: Jesus Christ accordingly has not suffered His kingdom to be behind the chiefest of the kingdoms of the earth in songs or in the use of music; for He has given to His servants what no other kingdom on earth possesses, a collection of Songs written with the finger of God, and has blessed their employment of the art of music, till it has far exceeded in glory that of the other kingdoms of the world.

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Q. What are the chief Songs of the Christian kingdom.

A. The Psalms of the Psalter, and other Songs found in the Canonical Scripture. To these, which are divine, and the acknowledged gift of God, may be added a large body of approved hymns, written by Saints.

Q. What is the music of the Church?

A. The music of the Church is that vast body of Christian melody which the Saints of Christ, of all nations, have, with His blessing, composed for the service of His sanctuary, and other pious and godly uses.

Q. What reason have we to know that JESUS CHRIST, when He was in the flesh in His kingdom, did sanction in any way the use of music and of the Psalter?

A. JESUS CHRIST, when he was in the flesh, did use to resort to the worship and prayers of the temple in Jerusalem, where the Levite singers sang the Psalms with trumpets and other instruments, in their courses, and where the people at fit times were accustomed to join in them, according to the order of the temple service. Also, He approved of the song of the children in the temple, and on the night of His passion He sang an hymn with his disciples, (St. Matth. xxvi. 30.)

Q. Have we any farther reason to know that JESUS CHRIST approves the use of music and the Psalter in His kingdom?

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A. Jesus Christ, when he was risen from the dead, spent forty days in discoursing with His apostles of things pertaining to His kingdom; and immediately after, we hear of His apostles continuing to frequent the service of the temple, and of their repeating together the second Psalm, lifting up their voices together with one accord, a circumstance indicating the manner, viz. singing, which was common to their nation in the use of the Psalter. This is exclusive of the many positive injunctions of the use of music, which occur in the Epistles of St. Paul, and of the sanction of the Church herself.

Q. Now if kings are no longer necessary to establish the use of the Psalter in the way of solemn Psalmody, by what means has this solemn use of the Psalmody been maintained in the Christian kingdom?

A. The enterprise and duty of maintaining the daily courses of Christian Psalmody, have been chiefly undertaken by the various families of religious orders, whose members have retired from the world, in order to serve God principally in the labour of maintaining the solemn Psalmody of Christ's kingdom, in the hope of gaining by this and other pious works, their sanctification in this life, and their reward in the life to come.

Q. What is their manner of accomplishing their task?

A. Originally they sang seven different solemn

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offices—the Nocturns, or the early Matin office, the Lauds, and five different offices during the day, concluding with the Vespers; to this has been since added an eighth office called Compline.

Q. Are their efforts the only means of supplying the solemn Psalmody of the Christian kingdom?

A. Psalmody, it is true, is their chief duty and vocation, but it is also to a less degree, and in a less perfect manner, that of every pastor and his congregation, with as much of frequency and solemnity as is compatible with their circumstances.

Q. Should we then understand that it is the will of our LORD JESUS CHRIST that the people should sing the Psalms in CHURCH, and take their part in whatever Psalmody there may be?

A. If JESUS CHRIST has set an example of worshipping GOD in the singing of the Psalms together with the people in the temple, this exercise cannot be otherwise than a most blessed labour. There cannot be a greater warrant for every Christian to attempt this, according to his skill, than the example of JESUS CHRIST.

Q. How may a Christian who desires to enjoy thankfully the precious gift of God in the Psalter, be best guided to make a devout use of it in Church?

A. He may consider seven things:

I. That the Psalm which is being sung, is a

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Song of the kingdom of Jesus Christ; not the work of man, but of the inspiration of God, and to be received by us in faith as most suited to our needs.

II. That we ourselves, being subjects of the kingdom of Christ, are called upon to express our love to Christ our King, and to our fellow-subjects assembled in the Church, by joining to the best of our power in singing the Psalm.

III. That the Psalm being a Song of the kingdom of Jesus CHRIST, is full of the deepest meaning, touching the graces and blessings of His kingdom, which it is God's will and our blessedness that we should search for, and seek to understand with the understanding.

IV. That the congregation will be stirred up to a sense of the love and brotherhood they ought to have one with another, from praising God with one voice and one accord; and also to a sense of the love they ought to have to God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for His mercy in calling them into so marvellous a state of salvation.

V. That the singer himself will be stirred up to love God and to bless Christ, by the very act of singing a Song of His kingdom, while his understanding will be fed by the holy and blessed truths conveyed in it.

VI. He should consider how great is the dignity of being admitted to sing divinely-given

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Songs in the house of God. Oh, Israel quam magna est Domus Dei et ingens locus possessionis ejus. Oh Israel, how great is the house of God, and the place of his possession that hath no end. *Baruch*, iii. 24.

VII. He should firmly convince himself of the truth, that the permission to sing Psalms in the house and the presence of God, is a true part of the grace purchased for us by the death of Jesus Christ, who worked our reconciliation with God by his sufferings and atonement upon the Cross. He should persuade himself that to refuse to sing the Psalms, would be to cast away the blessing of God as if it were some vile and worthless thing, to trample under foot the most gracious mercy of God, to display a contempt of God and of His Majesty in His own house, to harden the heart against His grace, and so to turn the back upon God, as almost to render it impossible even for His great and wonderful mercy to pardon such sin. Every good Christian will therefore understand that he cannot be too humbly thankful that God has not only called him into a state of salvation in which he may have hope for the future, but has even "raised him to sit with CHRIST in heavenly places," and "has put a new Song into his mouth, even a Thanksgiving unto our God."

Q. Is the singing of Psalms generally under-

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stood to be so great and blessed a gift of God's mercy?

A. A Christian should be guided entirely by that which is written in the Word of God, and should never enquire what is said or thought in the world. He should bear in mind that it is the daily work of the devil to endeavour to rob Christian people of the blessedness which has been restored to them in Jesus CHRIST, as he robbed Adam and Eve of their innocence and happiness when they were in the garden of Eden. And since it is the daily labour of the devil to persuade Christians to turn their backs upon the mercies and blessings of the kingdom of CHRIST, and to take instead the filth and ashes of his own kingdom; he should therefore firmly believe the written Word, and give ear to no voice that comes from the world, lest by so doing, he fall into a snare of the devil.

Q. How may a Christian strive to maintain in his mind a firm conviction of the blessings of divine Psalmody?

A. He should be convinced,

I. That without a holy and watchful life this will be impossible, because "praise becometh not the lips of a sinner, for it is not given him of the Lord," (Ecclesiasticus); and that the unholy and unrighteous, and they who love and are conformed to this world, cannot understand the things of God.

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II. That to keep the soul as it were in tune for the harmonies and worship of heaven, is a work of positive daily labour, in the fitting exercises of prayer, meditation, and other pious works.

III. Being convinced how great a work is the work of holy living, and having accustomed himself to bear the yoke of daily prayer, meditation, repentance, self-examination, and confession; a suitable portion of the Psalter should be made a daily exercise. This may be added to morning and evening prayer, or be used as opportunity shall best present itself, taking care that the exercise be daily, and be never omitted without grave cause.

Q. But is not frequent singing in Church to be dreaded, on account of the danger of its becoming a mere formal offering?

A. Our Saviour, on one occasion, cited the words of the prophet Isaiah: Populus hic labiis me honorat, cor autem longe est a me. "This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me." (St. Matt. xv. 8.)—The offering of Psalmody to Almighty God in His temple, even though it should be, which is scarcely possible, a mere formal offering, is in its degree to be commended as a formal act for the glory of God.—"This people honoureth me with their lips," for the honour of the lips is true honour,—yet is the offering to be regarded as imperfect, because God hath chiefly respect to the heart of

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those that come to worship him, and representeth himself grieved if the heart doth not truly accompany the lips.—Neither can such worship benefit the person who offers it.

Clamor ad Dominum, saith St. Augustine, qui fit ab orantibus, si sonitu corporalis vocis fiat, non intento in Deum corde quis dubitet inaniter fieri, si autem fiat corde, etiam silente corporis voce, alium quemlibet hominem potest latere, non Deum. Sive ergo cum voce carnis quando id opus est, sive cum silentio, ad Deum oramus, corde clamandum est.—St. Augustine, (in Ps. cxviii. 145.) When Psalmody is no more than a physical labour or a muscular exertion, who can doubt that it implies a contempt of God, and becomes a grave impiety.

Q. But is there no danger of weariness and disgust, from the too frequent use of singing?

A. Almighty God desires the just and not the excessive use of any of his gifts. What this may be in the particular case, must be left to a prudent judgment to determine; on the one hand we have the Psalmist saying, (*Psalm*, lxx. 7.) Oh let my mouth be filled with thy praise, that I may sing of thy glory and honour *all the day long;* on the other, a Church Hymn seems to say not less fitly,

Alleluia dulce carmen
Civibus cœlestibus
* * * *
Alleluia nos reatus
Cogit intermittere.

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Q. You said that the devil seeks to turn CHRISTIANS away from the practice of Psalmody.—How may he be resisted?

A. The artifices of the devil to hinder and pervert the practice of Divine Psalmody among Christian people, being so many as to be almost without number, may yet all be defeated and brought to nought by faith in the greater power of God, who, for Jesus CHRIST's sake, is willing to defend us. Seven artifices however may be mentioned, which should be considered and guarded against singly.

I. The first is, the inspiring of a fear and faintheartedness, which may be defeated by considering that there is no reason to fear, for that Jesus CHRIST, by his death and his Almighty power as God, has ensured to us the privilege of serving him "without fear, in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life." (Hymn of Zacharias.)

II. The second, a feeling of false shame. This may be overcome by considering that our divine Redeemer was not ashamed to die for us on the cross.

III. The third, ridicule of bad and foolish people. This must be overcome by summoning courage to despise and disregard it, and by meditating upon the example of Christ, bearing all the mockery of his enemies when he was upon the cross.

IV. The fourth, an example of contempt from

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worldly-minded people. This must be encountered and overcome by a firm belief in *the Word of God.*

V. A fifth, the opposition of enemies. This must be encountered and overcome by patience and long-suffering, by prayers for them, and by a quiet trust that God will call them to account for their evil deeds, except they repent.

VI. A sixth, by tempting Christian singers to vanity and display. This must be overcome by a meditation upon humility.

VII. A seventh, by tempting them to turn their gift to corrupt uses.

This last, which is a most subtle and deadly snare of the devil, and which must be expected to be always at hand, lurking in some form or another, should be made the subject of special watchfulness to overcome.

It should be made the matter of a direct prayer to God after some such form as the following, which may be used at stated times, as for instance, on all Sunday evenings, when the memory of Divine Psalmody will be fresh in the mind.

Oh, blessed Lord Jesus CHRIST! who wast manifested that thou mightest destroy the works of the devil; I humbly beseech Thee, look in mercy upon Thy servant, and suffer not the wicked enemy of my salvation to prevail against me with his snares, so as to teach me to despise any of Thy gracious mercies, or to turn any of Thy

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blessed and merciful gifts to me, into an occasion of sin; but grant me Thy heavenly grace, to be with me, to keep me from sin, and to aid me to love Thee only unto the end. Oh Thou, who with the Father and the Holy Ghost, livest and reignest, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

Q. How may a Christian feed and increase his love and zeal for the exercise of Divine Psalmody in the Church?

A. In seven ways.

I. By being determined resolutely to believe in what the Scripture says of the blessedness of the exercise.

II. By a devout and thankful daily practice of it, as opportunity shall permit, "for to him that hath shall be given."

III. By meditating upon all that the Christian Saints and theologians have said respecting Psalmody, as their words may occur to him, as, for instance, what is said of the power of Christian music by a very recent author: "Yet, is it possible, that that inexhaustible evolution and disposition of notes—so rich, yet so simple—so intricate, yet so regulated—so various, yet so majestic—should be a mere sound which is gone and perishes? Can it be, that those mysterious stirrings of heart, and keen emotions, and strange yearnings after we know not what, and awful impressions from we know not whence,

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should be wrought in us by what is unsubstantial, and comes and goes, and begins and ends in itself? It is not so; it cannot be. No, they have escaped from some higher sphere; they are the outpourings of eternal harmony in the medium of created sound; they are echoes from our home, they are the voice of angels, or the magnificat of Saints, or the living laws of Divine governance, or the Divine attributes; something they are besides themselves, which we cannot compass, which we cannot utter—though mortal man, and he, perhaps, not otherwise distinguished above his fellows, has the gift of eliciting them."

IV. By meditating upon the example of the blessed Mother of God, who has given a Song to the Church.

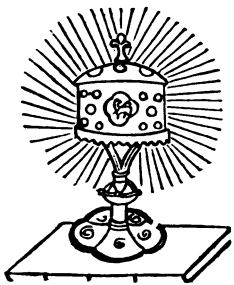
V. By considering that Psalmody is the gift of the angels who have not sinned, given back to man who has sinned, and is now under reconciliation, purchased by the death of Christ.

VI. By bearing in mind what is revealed of music, as the present employment of angels above, and the future employment of those that shall be saved.

Also, duly to meditate upon some parts of the book of Revelations, which reveal this to us, (Rev. chap. xv. 28, xix. 5, &c.) would, with the grace of God, lead to a devout sense, how great a blessing has been restored to the earth in the giving back of Divine Psalmody, which was lost

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at the fall, and the great need of a holy and religious life, abounding in prayer and good works, that the pleasure which we now taste in the courts of the Lord's house on earth, in part, and with many imperfections arising from our sins, we may, by the mercy of God, and for Jesus CHRIST's sake, be counted worthy to taste in fulness in heaven among the multitude of the redeemed.



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CHAPTER VI.

OF THE FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE OF THE PSALMS.

Q. You said that it was requisite that the Psalter should be understood, is it not difficult to attain a true understanding of it?

A. Owing to its being a book of Songs, the truths contained in it are not set forth in the same direct manner that they are in other parts of the Scripture, but under figures and parables, which are full of secret meaning.

Q. Does the book itself anywhere expressly state that it contains hidden and secret truths, not openly expressed?

A. It is sufficient to remember that it is the work of the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, in order to be convinced that it is full of deep and hidden meaning, were nothing expressly said upon the subject. But the Psalmist twice speaks of there being a hidden figurative meaning in his words.

Ps. xlviii. 4. Inclinabo in parabolam aurem meam, et aperiam in psalterio propositionem meam. "I will incline mine ear to a parable, I will show my dark speech upon the harp."

Ps. lxxvii. 2. Aperiam in parabolis os meum, loquar propositiones ab initio. "I will open my

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mouth in a parable, I will declare hard sentences of old."

Q. What is the feeling with which the sense of this deep and hidden meaning of the Psalms should inspire us?

A. It should inspire us with great reverence and awe, and a sense of the weakness of our own natural understanding, which cannot of itself attain to the interpretation of the least of the hidden things of God.

Q. How are these secret and hidden truths contained in the Psalms?

A. In the form of parables or figures, which, on being rightly interpreted, open an entirely new sense and richness of meaning?

Q. Can this be explained by any easy and simple instances?

A. Yes. (Ps. cxxxvi.) Super flumina Babylonis, illic sedimus et flevimus; cum recordaremur Zion.—"By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept, when we remembered Thee, O Zion."—The literal meaning of the outside of these words, expresses no more than the sorrow of the captives of Israel in Babylon, when they thought of their home, Zion. But when understood in an easy and obvious figurative sense, it expresses the lament of a CHRISTIAN soul, as living in the captivity of this world, (Babylon,) and after meditating upon the glories of her home, the heavenly Jerusalem, which is above, where Christ reigneth,

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sitting down to weep at the thought of its many miseries, as, for example, the cold heartless ways of men one to another, their petty selfishness, the rudeness, derision, and ungodliness of this land of captivity, as compared with the joy and love of the blessed angels and saints that dwell above.

Again, in (Ps. xliv.) a description occurs of a king's daughter, of her being all glorious within, of her clothing of wrought gold, of her being brought to the king in a raiment of needlework of divers colours, also of virgins, her fellows, bearing her company. The mere literal meaning of all which, would seem to describe no more than some ceremonial of the court of David. But understood in its figurative and hidden meaning, the Psalm describes the CHURCH of CHRIST and her gifts, under the figure of the king's daughter; Her being all glorious within, will signify the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the CHURCH. Her clothing of wrought gold, Her outward splendour in the world. Her raiment of needlework of divers colours, the robe in which she is presented to the King, the many divers languages in which the Church, consisting of all nations, calls upon GOD.* The virgins, her fellows, that bear her company, (virgines proximæ ejus), may signify those who, brought

* There is a work published in Berlin, in which the Lord's prayer is translated into 500 languages.

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over by the example of the Church, draw near to worship God.

Q. Are not these figurative meanings often very fanciful and uncertain?

A. The carnal mind, which is enmity with God, and which cannot enter into the things of the Spirit, is apt to regard all interpretations that it cannot understand, as fanciful and useless. But a Christian will seek to enter into the full meaning of the word of God with humility, and, at the same time, with caution and judgment, for it is possible to err grievously in finding the figurative interpretation of Holy Scripture.

Q. Is a knowledge of the figurative meaning of the Holy Scripture much to be coveted?

A. It should be remembered that charity, that is, the love of God and man, is more to be desired than *knowledge* of *mysteries*, and that a Christian does not need more than a slight knowledge of them, to enable him to make a very profitable use of the Psalms, both in church and at home. Yet there is no question, but that the study of the figurative meanings of the Psalter, may, if pursued with humility of mind, and with safe guidance, become very highly blessed, and that it is among those good gifts which the Apostle exhorts Christians earnestly to desire.

Q. How may an ordinary Christian best seek

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to attain a knowledge of the principal and most needful figurative truths, conveyed in the Psalms?

A. When once the mind has fully mastered the figurative interpretation of the sacred words, in a small number of instances, the frequent devout use of the Psalter, as a book of devotion and meditation, in church and at home, will, with God's blessing, suggest fresh meanings. These should be noted as they occur, and proved by referring to some book or living adviser. Thus, by degrees, the mind will become stored with such meanings, and this will cause the Psalter to become, what in truth it is, a fountain from whence new truth may always be drawn, a well of water springing up unto eternal life.



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CHAPTER VII.

The Psalter the Song-Book of the Kingdom of Christ.

OF CHRIST, KING OF ISRAEL, AND HIS MIGHTY WORKS.

Q. If the Psalter be the Book of Songs of the kingdom of Christ, ought we not to find frequent mention in them of CHRIST the King, and of His mighty works?

A. Yes, like the songs of all other true human kingdoms, the Songs of the kingdom of CHRIST, sing of Him, His birth, life, and His mighty works.

Q. How may a general understanding be best attained of the manner in which CHRIST the King is spoken of in the Psalms?

A. I. It will often happen that the Psalm speaks directly in the person of, or concerning a king. Here there is no difficulty, for the person meant is Jesus Christ, as in Psalm xx: Domine in virtute tuâ lætabetur *Rex*, et super salutare tuum exultabit vehementer. *The King*, that is CHRIST the King, shall rejoice in thy strength, O Lord, exceeding glad shall He be of thy salvation.

II. But CHRIST, the King of Israel, being more or less directly the burden of the whole Psalter, by first thoroughly learning to understand the

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nature of His works, this very knowledge of them will assist the devout reader of the Psalms, to discover the manner in which Jesus CHRIST is the burden of any particular Psalm. Let it then be considered,

1. That when our Saviour Jesus Christ came upon earth, as the second Adam, he came to be the first-fruits of a new creation of men, who were to take their nature from Him; and, moreover, that He came not to destroy or to remove that which was before, but to renew, to regenerate, and to sanctify.

2. That when He came as CHRIST the King, the Head of a greater kingdom than ever was known before upon earth, He neither overthrew or destroyed the various offices, callings, and ways of life which belong to the nature of kingdoms, and which are necessary to the well-being of men and women of every rank and station living together in a kingdom. But, on the contrary, being about to found a new and spiritual kingdom out of men, which, nevertheless, should for a time dwell upon earth, after the manner of other human societies, and to place within it His servants in all the capacities and offices, which are known to minister to the well-being of any true living human kingdom. He Himself was pleased to bear in His own person, and to sanctify the chief necessary offices, professions, or ways of life, of a human kingdom, to the

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end, that after their sanctification in His own person, they might thenceforth be safely and honourably exercised by His own servants, as occasion should require.

Q. What are the offices which Jesus Christ has sanctified in His own person, for the benefit of his servants, in their passage through this life?

A. Three Sacred Offices, and ten ordinary offices, or functions of social life.

Q. What are the three sacred offices?

A. I. King,
II. Priest,
III. Prophet,
} which have been accounted sacred in all nations.

Q. What ten ordinary offices or functions have been sanctified by Jesus Christ?

A. I. Lawyer, or Canonist.
II. Lawgiver.
III. Advocate.
IV. A Tax, or Rate-payer.
V. Captain.
VI. A Singer.
VII. A Physician.
VIII. Treasurer.
IX. Carpenter.
X. Servant.

Q. Do the Psalms sing of all the several works of Christ, done by Him in these various offices?

A. Being the Songs of the kingdom of Christ, they necessarily celebrate His works: "For the Lord hath so done His marvellous works, that they ought to be had in remembrance," (*Ps.* cx.)

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But the divine Psalms were given to keep His works in remembrance.

Q. How may an understanding be best gained, of the manner in which the works of Christ are sung in the Psalter?

A. The language of the Psalms being to so great an extent figurative, and, as was before said, the person and reign of David being used by the Holy Ghost as the figure of Christ, a good knowledge of the various works of CHRIST, will go far to enable the pious Christian to discover, interpret, and apply the language of the Psalms to the works of his King.

His great works then may be counted as follows:

I. As KING, three great works.

I. His taking to Himself the title of King before Pilate, and in the three chief languages of the earth, when He was upon the cross.
II. His subduing His enemies, by the power of His example and His grace.
III. His ascending to take His throne in heaven.

II. As HIGH PRIEST, or PRIEST, ten great works:

I. By offering an atoning sacrifice to God for sins, even His own body and blood upon the cross.
II. By the ministry of reconciliation, as when He remitted the sins of the sick of the palsy, and of the woman taken in adultery.
III. In the cleansing of leprosy.
IV. As giving blessing, which He gave to the poor and to little children, by putting His hands upon them.

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V. By ordaining and consecrating men to be Priests, and giving them power to offer sacrifice, and to remit and retain sins.

VI. By consecrating material things, and making them holy, as in the miracle of the loaves.

VII. By the work of an Intercessor, as when he prayed for St. Peter, that Satan might not have him, to sift him as wheat.

VIII. By giving thanks to God in public, as in the miracle of the loaves.

IX. As Mediator, in presenting the prayers of His people.

X. As the Sanctifier and Cleanser of humanity—first, by assuming a sinless humanity in His own person; next, by the gift of the Holy Sacraments to His people.

III. As PROPHET, three great works:

I. By teaching a complete body of moral doctrine, for the improvement and guidance of the daily life of the people, to instruct them how to govern and conduct themselves well, in this life upon earth.

II. By revealing to them the life and immortality of the world to come, with all things needful to be known respecting it.

III. By revealing things that should come to pass on earth in the generations to come, part of which are already fulfilled, and part of which are still to happen.

In these three sacred functions, the greatest works of our divine Redeemer are to be looked for. His works in such other offices or functions as he was pleased to take to Himself, consist almost more in the fact of His having sanctified them in His own person, than from his having worked any

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number of signal works, which may be separately referred to them.

As Lawyer, or Canonist—He brought the true spiritual interpretation of the old canon law. "Lex per Moysen data est, gratia et veritas per Jesum Christum facta est," (*John* i. 17.) That is, the letter of the law came by Moses; but the grace and the truth of it, by Jesus Christ.

As Lawgiver—He abolished the Jewish canon law of marriage, and gave His own in its place.

As Advocate—He pleaded the cause of all manner of distressed persons with the rich, and exhorted these to bestow their means to relieve them.

As Tax, or Rate Payer—He worked a miracle to pay the tribute demanded from Him.

As Captain—It is the tradition of the Church, that He spent the forty days after His resurrection, in discoursing of things pertaining to His *kingdom*, that is, its future government, discipline and order. Hence perhaps He is called by St. Paul, (*Heb.* ii. 10.), αρχηγος της σωτηριας. A Captain of our salvation, as having given tactics, discipline and ceremonial order to His militant kingdom.

As Singer—He sanctified the office of praising God in song.

As Physician—He went about the streets and villages healing sickness and diseases, although He did not use the ordinary natural means.

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As Treasurer—He received alms for the poor, and was in the habit of ordering what was collected to be distributed among them.

As Carpenter and Servant—He sanctified the condition of the labouring man and household servant by His life, up to the age of thirty years, in the house of his reputed father, St. Joseph, who was a carpenter. In the latter capacity, he washed the feet of His disciples.

Q. How may this knowledge of the works of JESUS CHRIST be best applied, to the obtaining a knowledge of the various ways in which they form the subject of the several Psalms?

A. It will be perhaps impossible fully to understand the wonderfully various manner in which the works of JESUS CHRIST are spoken of in the Psalms, under parables and figures of the reign of David and other kings of Israel, without the help of some distinct guide and explanation of the meaning of the Psalms, together with considerable thought and meditation. This difficulty should be understood, to prevent disappointment. Yet it is also certain, that if every CHRISTIAN will make use of the understanding which God has given him, and bearing in mind what the great works of his Saviour are, will apply his whole understanding devoutly to the Psalms whenever he uses them, in Church or at home, he will gain much very profitable knowledge of the works of Jesus, as they are set forth in the Psalter, under figures

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and parables; and will, to his continual pleasure and surprise, be rewarded by finding Him whom his soul seeketh for, and be enabled to give thanks with his *heart* and *understanding* for the "operations of the hands of his Lord."

Q. Has our Saviour Jesus CHRIST completed his works, and is He now at rest?

A. No. Jesus CHRIST still performs mighty works on our behalf, in Heaven where he now is, and He is expected to come again, to fulfil the great work of judging all men for their deeds done upon this earth. All the works above mentioned, are those which were given Him to do in the flesh, and which were accomplished when He cried out on the cross, "It is finished."

Q. What are the great works which He still works on our behalf, now that He is ascended into Heaven?

A. Though He is ascended into heaven, He is still King, Priest, and Prophet. As King, He now governs the whole body of His kingdom upon earth, interposing by his grace and spirit, to provide pastors and teachers for his people; distributing blessings and curses where they are deserved, bringing the light of the everlasting gospel to those nations that have faith to receive it, taking it away from others that have forfeited it, and ever carrying on his government by means of his various officers. For all power is given to *Him* in *heaven* and *on earth*.

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As Priest, He exercises a priesthood in Heaven, by presenting to God the Father, all the prayers and supplications which are made to him by poor and suffering people upon earth, in his name, and by offering up continual prayers and intercessions on our behalf Himself.

As Prophet, He directs and guides all those who serve Him in the labour and work of teaching the doctrines and precepts of His gospel to his people on earth, instructing them in the right use of their offices, and bestowing blessings and curses upon them as they deserve either.

Q. Are these great works, which Jesus CHRIST is now working on earth from His throne in heaven, among those things that are sung of in the Psalms?

A. Yes. The Psalms would not be worthy of the Divine wisdom of Him who has appointed them to be the Songs of His kingdom, if they did not celebrate the works which He works in heaven; they therefore sing of these works also.

Q. What are the great works which Jesus CHRIST is expected to work in the time to come?

A. Two. I. The putting down of an Antichrist, and,—II. The last Judgment. He has promised that He will come again to put down all his enemies, and that, having put them down, all men shall then rise with their bodies, and shall stand before Him, to be judged for every word and deed which they have spoken and done in the

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body, and those that on enquiry shall be found by Him to have done evil without repentance, shall be condemned by Him to go into eternal fire, prepared for the devil and his angels; and those that shall be found to have done good, shall be received by Him into everlasting life.

Q. Is it possible to point out any particular Psalms, as more clearly than others, celebrating any of Christ's great works?

A. Yes; it would be very possible to point out many Psalms, as for instance,—

His Crucifixion, 21, 30, 68 Psalms.
His Resurrection, 3, 15, 115.
His Ascension, 46, 67.
His eternal Priesthood, 109,
His coming to judge the world, 66, 95, 97.

But the great profit and pleasure of the Psalms consists in learning oneself to decipher and interpret them, during their use either in Church, or at home, in private meditation. When persons are on a journey, and expect to see beautiful objects on the road side, they are on the watch for them; it is in this manner that all should read, sing, or meditate in the Psalms.

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CHAPTER VIII.

The Psalter the Song-Book of the Kingdom of Christ.

OF THE CHURCH THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST.

Q. Did you not say that the Psalter spoke in the person of the Church of CHRIST? How may the language of the Psalter, in this respect, be best understood?

A. The following three rules will serve as a key to explain a great part of that which regards the Church in the Psalter.

Rule I. Whenever ISRAEL occurs in the Psalms, a Christian should understand it as spoken of the people of CHRIST, the subjects of his kingdom. The reason of which may be thus shortly explained.

After the Patriarch Jacob had wrestled all night with the angel, he received the surname ISRAEL, which signifies, "a prince with God," or, "in the sight of God," a name full of meaning, as indicating his having prevailed with God, to obtain a blessing. Afterwards, when God chose the children of Jacob to be his own people, a kingdom of priests to him, and a holy seed, they obtained the name of ISRAEL, not as the descendants after the flesh of Jacob, which they were, but as chosen of God, to prevail with him by

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prayer and sacrifice; and with man, by the power of the laws, and customs, and statutes, which God had given them. ISRAEL, therefore, as used in the Scriptures, signifies the people chosen of God to have power with God and man, and to prevail by means taught and appointed by himself.

This privilege and Divine election was in the order of God's providence for many years the possession of the twelve tribes, whose founders were the twelve sons of Jacob, whom Moses formed into one people, and whom Joshua placed in the possession of the promised land of Canaan. Yet, never so exclusively theirs, as to be denied to those among the nations, not of the seed of Jacob, who were willing to come over and join themselves to the Lord God of Israel, in paying obedience to the statutes and ordinances of the law of Moses; that is, *Israel* in its spiritual meaning, as signifying, "the election," the chosen people of God, those among men who have been found worthy to gain the faith, hope, and love of God, was never, even before Jesus CHRIST came in the flesh, absolutely confined to the seed of Abraham; but God having in his providence fixed upon that people, as those to whom He would reveal his name and attributes, even in their day showed, that Israel signified, not merely a son of Jacob by lineal descent, but one who had been brought over to the faith, hope, and love of God. But when Jesus CHRIST came in the flesh, and

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was lifted up that he might draw all men unto him, that which was for a time, viz. the law of Moses, and the lineal descent from Jacob, which, during the pleasure of God, had served as a mark whereby His Israel, or chosen people, might be externally known, came to an end; and CHRIST being come, not a servant as was Moses, but Lord of his own house, was pleased, henceforth, to extend the privilege of election to a place among the spiritual Israel, to all nations of the earth, ordaining the Sacrament of baptism as the means whereby they should all become partakers of the privilege of election among the ISRAEL of CHRIST. Thus St. Augustine, Christus custodit Israel, Esto ergo Israel, Quid est Israel? Israel interpretatur Videns Deum, et quomodo videtur Deus? Primo per fidem postea per speciem * * * Si credideris in corde tuo quia Deus illum (Christum) suscitabit de mortuis, salvus eris. Hoc credere, hoc est esse Israel, hoc est videre Deum.—*St. Augustine in Psalmum*, CXX.

The election then, or they that are rightly called Israel, are under the various dispensations of God, substantially the same class of persons, *i. e.* those among men, whom God has found worthy to receive the faith, hope, and love of Himself; differing only under respective dispensations, by the outward marks of their election, and also by the more or less rich gifts of grace which God has been pleased to bestow.

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To understand therefore that the Church of the faithful people of CHRIST is signified by the name Israel in the Psalms, and that the Church of CHRIST, in point of fact, in her use of the Psalms, is speaking of herself under the name of ISRAEL, that now belongs to her in virtue of her having been found worthy of the election · this is not to give a new sense to a scripture word, but to continue its true original meaning, and to use it in the same sense in which the Saints of God of all ages have used it, as will be plain from an instance. When David, speaking before CHRIST's coming in the flesh, makes the prayer, (*Ps.* 24.) Libera Deus Israel ex omnibus tribulationibus suis—"Deliver ISRAEL, oh God, out of all his troubles;" he is to be understood to pray, not for the sons of Jacob as such, but for all those who had joined themselves to the Lord God of Israel, who professed obedience to his statutes and ordinances, and faith, love, and hope in his Holy Name; that is, all those who looked for the promised salvation of God, and believed upon CHRIST as *to come.* When we now use the same prayer, we pray in it for all those who believe upon CHRIST as *come,* and who have joined themselves to him by receiving his Holy Sacrament of baptism. The great change that *has* taken place, being not in the kind and description of persons properly designated as ISRAEL, but in the fact, that the lineal descendants of those, who, in the time of

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David, were for the most part ISRAEL or believers, are now not so, but unbelievers and reprobate, a small remnant only having believed upon Him.

Rule II. That under the figure of Zion and Jerusalem, a CHRISTIAN will understand, the earthly Tabernacle or place of the Sanctuary of God, which has overspread the whole earth, in the various CHURCHES and consecrated buildings of CHRISTENDOM.

Rule III. That, considered as words put into the mouth of any particular congregation, with a meaning applying to themselves, Zion and Jerusalem should be understood to signify the particular Church or Sanctuary of God, where they assemble round the true altar, and the real presence of Christ under the veil of the Holy Eucharist, and where his true worship is offered by those who come there to serve Him.

The Christian edification arising from the latter rule must be here its recommendation in the room of any set argument to establish it.

Q. Can this be exemplified in any plain instances?

A. In the Psalter are found several forms of blessing, such as the following: (Ps. 127.) Benedicat tibi Dominus ex Zion—The Lord from out of Zion shall so bless Thee; or, in another Psalm; Dominus vos tueatur ex Zion—The Lord send thee help out of Zion. Will it not warm every CHRISTIAN'S devotion and gratitude on hearing the Dominus

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vobiscum, the Priest's blessing from the altar, to be able to regard it as the blessing which the Lord in the Psalms has promised to send out of Zion? or, again, (Ps. 136.) Hymnum cantate nobis de *canticis Zion.* Quomodo cantabimus canticum Domini in terra alienâ. Si oblitus fuero tui Jerusalem, oblivioni detur dextera mea—"Sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? If I forget thee, O Jerusalem! let my right hand forget her cunning." Could we recognize the Church and the altar where we worship in the *Zion* which the Psalmist cannot forget—could we understand by the songs of Zion, her sacred Songs, in which as children and old men, we had praised the name of our God, should we be able to refrain from saying, with the Psalmist, "If I forget thee, oh Sanctuary of my God! oh Jerusalem! where I and my fathers have praised God, let my right hand forget her cunning?"

Q. Do the Psalms speak in any other manner of the CHURCH of CHRIST?

A. Yes. The CHURCH of CHRIST is the subject of several Psalms, under various emblems and figures.

I. Under the figure of a Virgin, the king's daughter, in a raiment of divers colours.
II. Under the figure of the Vine which God brought out of Egypt.
III. The mountain of the Lord.
IV. The house and Temple of the Lord.

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V. The dove with silver wings and feathers of gold.
VI. The moon, the faithful witness in heaven.
VII. The cedar in Libanus.

Q. Do the Psalms, as the Songs of the kingdom of CHRIST, resemble the songs of other kingdoms, in the point of celebrating the glory, extent, and majesty of their kingdom?

A. The Psalter being the Song-Book of the kingdom of CHRIST, intended for the devout use of the believers upon CHRIST while they continue members of His kingdom here below, speaks of all things which it pleased the wisdom of God to deem desirable for the subjects of the kingdom, wherewith to be edified and inspirited, touching the kingdom of which they are here members during this present life.

Q. What are the principal ways of describing the CHURCH and the chief things which are spoken of Her?

A. The Psalms speak of ten chief attributes of the CHURCH or kingdom of CHRIST.

I. Of Her glory, power, and dominion over the kings of the earth.
II. Of Her extension from east to west, and from the one sea to the other.
III. Of Her receiving and gathering in the heathen for her inheritance.
IV. Of Her continually enlarging herself, and bringing fresh nations to the knowledge of GOD.
V. Of Her unceasing warfare with the unrighteous, and her labour to root out all wicked doers out of the land.

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VI. Of Her never ceasing worship of prayer, Psalmody, and thanksgiving.

VII. Of Her suffering, scorn, contempt, and hatred from her enemies.

VIII. Of Her own many falls and transgressions, with God's chastisements thereupon, and his mercy after repentance.

IX. Of Her patient waiting for the Lord during her period of banishment from heaven, and her pilgrimage upon earth.

X. Of Her promised final deliverance from all her enemies.



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CHAPTER IX.

The Psalter the Song-Book of the Kingdom of Christ.

OF THE WARFARE OF THE CHURCH AND OF HER ENEMIES.

Q. Did you not say that the Psalter spoke in the person of the CHURCH militant here upon earth? In what way is the CHURCH said to be militant?

A. The CHURCH of CHRIST having received from Him in the Sacrament of Baptism, His own new and regenerate nature, which is contrary to the carnal nature that is first born into the world, all they who preserve this new nature, are contrary in their whole minds, being new creatures in CHRIST Jesus, to those who are after the nature of the former man, the old Adam. Hence the warfare of the CHURCH of CHRIST in this world.

Q. What is the reason and cause of the warfare of the CHURCH?

A Jesus CHRIST, the Redeemer of men, who is the head of the CHURCH and who has given to His people an example in his own person, to the intent that they should follow it, came upon earth to do the will of his Father, who is in heaven. To do this is contrary to the old nature of men, who seek only to do their own wills, and care

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neither to do or to learn the will of their Father which is in heaven. Jesus CHRIST, as a man wholly renounced his own will, and sought only to do the will of God. In like manner, all who believe upon Him and are baptised, and have not quenched the light of the Holy Spirit, have within them a strong desire to do and seek the will of God, and this desire is always leading them to act in a manner wholly different from those who do not know, or knowing, do not love or desire to do the will of God. Hence, the real warfare of the CHURCH, which is partly inward, a warfare in the soul from the remains of a corrupt nature not wholly subdued, and which leads away from God; and partly outward, from the hatred and aversion of those who follow only their own will, and who hate to be put in mind of the excellence of that will of God, which they do not care to follow, by the witness and example of those who do follow it, and renounce their own.

Q. How do the Psalms speak of this warfare of the Church of CHRIST?

A. In the manner of war-songs; that is, we may regard the Psalter as containing the Songs of our Christian warfare, graciously given by Almighty God, to animate us in the good fight of faith so long as we continue members of the Church militant upon earth.

Q. How does the Psalter come to contain war-songs?

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A. It belongs to the nature of a true living kingdom to have war-songs and warlike music; indeed, no king ever yet lived on earth, who had not some instruments of music for his armies, and his war-songs, either as used in battle, or as celebrating the deeds of his armies in their wars.

Jesus Christ, in like manner, the Captain of our salvation, having placed his Church in a state of warfare, has given her war-songs.

Q. It is the nature of war-songs to speak of enemies—do the war-songs of the Psalter speak of the enemies of Christ's kingdom?

A. Yes they do.

Q. Who, and what, then, are the enemies of Christ's kingdom?

A. Three:

I. The devil and his angels, who are renounced in baptism.

II. The world, renounced in baptism as the "pompæ Satanæ."

III. The flesh, against which Christians are taught to pray.

Q. What is meant by the world?

A. By the world, in the Scripture is meant, the whole of the prsent order of the life of man upon earth, which, although exceedingly beautiful, is yet corrupt in the sight of God.

Q. How is the world the enemy of the CHURCH?

A. Because the world, which is a grand attractive system of beauty and order, is corrupt and

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lieth in wickedness—and the CHURCH, which is a counter or rival system, is holy, being washed and sanctified, and there is no concord between CHRIST and Belial, between light and darkness.

Q. Whence arises the enmity of the world to the CHURCH?

A. It arises from the love which men have for the seeming beauty, although real darkness and corruption of the world, rather than the light which is offered them in the kingdom of CHRIST.

Q. What particulars are given in the Psalter respecting the hatred borne by the world to the Church?

A. Ten different characters belonging to the world, are described in the Psalms as bitter enemies of the CHURCH.

They are,

I. The deceitful and treacherous, whose words are softer than honey, yet have war in their hearts. (Ps. 54.)

II. The ungodly, who is so proud that he careth not for God, neither is God in all his thoughts. (Ps. 9.)

III. The enemies of peace, (Hi qui oderunt pacem, Ps. 119,) whose delight is to cut with their tongue as with a sharp razor, and imagine mischief on their beds. (Ps. 35.)

IV. The carnal, called (Ezech. xvi. 26,) the Egyptians, great of flesh, who are enclosed in their own fat, (Ps. xvi. 10,) (quorum cor sicut lac coagulatum, Ps. 118,) whose heart is as fat as brawn.

V. The obstinate, who stop their ears as the deaf adder, (sicut aspidis surdæ obturantes aures suas, Ps. 57.)

VI. The wealthy and proud, who are full of scorn and reproach against the Church. (Ps. 122.)

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VII. The envious, who hate their neighbours.
VIII. The slanderers and false accusers.
IX. The unbeliever, who says in his heart, There is no God. (Insipiens qui dixit in corde suo. Non est Deus. (Ps. 52.)
X. Heretics and schismatics, who hate the Church, and cry, Exinanite exinanite usque ad fundamentum in ea—*Down with it, down with it, even to the ground.* (Ps. 136.)

Q. What is meant by the flesh?

A. The flesh is our material nature, which is born after the first Adam, and which with difficulty obeys the law and will of God. Spiritus quidem promptus, sed caro infirma, (St. Matt. xxvi. 41,) said Jesus Christ; the Spirit indeed is ready, but the flesh is weak.

Q. How are the devil and his angels described in the Psalms?

A. Under the figure of Pharaoh and the Egyptians.

Q. How are the ten worldly enemies of the Church described?

A. Open allusions to them are scattered over the whole Psalter, with the exception of the tenth class, heretics and schismatics. These are spoken of under figures.

Q. What are the figures under which they are spoken of?

A Under the figure of the nations in the midst of whom ISRAEL dwelt, as in Psalm lxxxii.

2. Quoniam ecce inimici tui sonuerunt et qui oderunt te extulerunt caput.

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3. Super populum tuum malignaverunt consilium, et cogitaverunt adversus sanctos tuos.

4. Dixerunt venite et disperdamus eos de gente et non memoretur nomen Israel ultra.

5. Quoniam cogitaverunt unanimiter, simul adversum te testamentum disposuerunt, tabernacula Idumæorum, et Ismaelitæ, Moab et Hagareni, Gebal et Ammon et Amalec, alienigenæ cum habitantibus Tyrum, &c.

They have said, Come and let us root them out, that they be no more a people, and that the name of ISRAEL be had no more in remembrance.

For they have cast their heads together with one consent, and are confederate against Thee.

The tabernacles of the Edomites, the Ismaelites, the Moabites and Hagarenes.

Gebal, Ammon, and Amalech, the Philistines, with them that dwell at Tyre. Assur also is joined with them, and they have holpen the children of Lot.

And again, in Ps. 136, under the figure of Edom.

Q. Is it not an objection to the Psalter, as a book of Prayer and Devotion, that it should contain Psalms such as these?

A. To make such an objection, is, in a manner, to speak evil of the gift of God, who has, together with Psalms of love, prayer, and penitence, also given the above, and in the example of His holy apostles, (see Acts iv. 24,) shown us the manner

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of their use. Yet it may remove a stumbling-block to consider the reason of the Divine gift, which may be stated as follows:

It is written in the Wisdom of Solomon, God created man to be immortal, and made him to be an image of His own eternity, nevertheless, through envy of the devil came death into the world, and they that do hold of his side do find it, (Sap. ii. 23, 24.) Satan, the hater of mankind, having gained a footing in the creation which God had made perfect, and having brought into it death, or rather sin, for sin it is that causeth death, the creation of God came into such a condition, as that it was no longer easy for those born into the world to love the unseen GOD their Father, above the visible things which they found in the world. Thus the hearts of men, as they lived in the world, being divided on the one hand between those instincts of, and yearnings after, the unseen GOD, which they still retained, and the love of the creatures which they saw, did, as the apostle testifies, (Rom. i.) throughout the heathen nations fall away to the love of the perishable creature, and became estranged from God. When, therefore, JESUS CHRIST came in the flesh, that GODHEAD which up to that time had been loved and worshipped by the aid of the divinely given symbols and sacrifices of the law of Moses among the Jews, and by voluntary sacrifices and worship among the other nations, was manifested

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as a Man sent of God to draw all men unto Him. All men so drawn to Him, and baptized, being His CHURCH. Now it has followed, as experience shows, that to love God manifested in the person of JESUS CHRIST, is to hate the things over which the devil is master in this world, for there is no *concord* between CHRIST and Belial. And hence the inevitable necessity and love of Jesus Christ leading to a life of combat and warfare. Because it is the nature of men to strive for the things which they love; and the CHRISTIAN who loves GOD manifest in the flesh, will as surely strive for the things of JESUS CHRIST, as the man who loves the perishable creatures of the world will strive for them. When, therefore, God might, had he been so pleased, have wholly undone his work of creation, and have brought it to nothing again, as seeing that it had departed from Him; yet He was pleased to choose mercy before judgment, and to show His only-begotten Son to the nations of the earth, to the intent that they might *see* and love Him, and thus recover that which they had lost through envy of the devil. Yet, because this work of the mercy of God is not the fresh creation of another new, innocent, and perfect work made in the image of the eternity of God, happy because good; but the recovery and restoration of a work of creation once good and happy, now, through the envy and subtlety of the devil, fallen, and subject to death and misery, yet not

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wholly corrupt; and because the acceptance of this remedy and recovery is not compulsory, but a matter of free choice, which some choose, others scorn and reject: therefore, they who accept the faith and love of CHRIST, are, from the very fact that the acceptance of them is a matter of free choice, and not at all of necessity, placed in a state of warfare and opposition to those, who do not choose to accept, but scorn and reject them. For he that is born after the flesh, the *apostle testifies*, persecutes Him that is born after the Spirit, (Gal. iv. 29.) Since, then, this conflict of the CHURCH, and of Christians in the CHURCH with external enemies, is a necessity arising out of the circumstances of the case, from the different objects on which they have set their love, and one which could not be avoided, unless GOD were to deal in some other way with His fallen creation, than he has seen fit to deal; the wisdom and mercy of God in giving to His CHURCH such Songs as those here spoken of, is fully justified. For if there must needs be a strife of good and evil upon earth, experience has shown what comfort and courage soldiers in battle have found in war songs. And since the Christian faith and the love of CHRIST are pearls of greater price than all besides, and yet could not be brought into a corrupt world without throwing those who should find and become possessed of them, into warfare with those who should reject them; so God, out of love

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and tender regard to those thus placed in the strife of good and evil, has given them most holy and divine war-songs to sustain them in their warfare, and encourage them to go onwards to their victory.

Q. Is the gift then of such war-songs to be regarded as a great mercy?

A. Yes, as a great and special mercy, vouchsafed to those whom the faith, hope, and love of God, has necessarily thrown into a state of warfare.

Q. Is it a matter of experience that these Psalms have afforded comfort to CHRISTIANS in the sufferings occasioned by their warfare?

A. St. Athanasius gives the following advice, (Epist. ad Marcellinum): "If thou suffer persecution from thy people, and many rise up against thee, sing the 3rd Psalm. If, when thou seest wicked men laying snares for thee, thou desirest thy prayer to be heard, sing the 5th Psalm. If any man shall have given counsel against thee, as Ahitophel against David, and this be told thee, sing the 7th Psalm, and put thy trust in the Lord."

Q. What is the peculiar consolation that may be derived from these Psalms, and whence does it come?

A. All that is required, is faith to believe that God is all-powerful, to bring good out of the most desperate evil, and that these Songs of our CHRIS-

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TIAN warfare come to us from Him, and their *peculiar* consolation lies in the fact, that an Almighty God *cannot* suffer his *own Songs* to belie his Truth, and that He cannot deceive any, the least of his servants, who may use these his own Songs with a devout and faithful heart, in the midst of their difficulties and dangers.

Q. Do these Songs, then, give to every CHRISTIAN a positive assurance of victory?

A. No. Victory in the CHRISTIAN warfare is never complete until death comes. Be thou faithful unto death, saith the Spirit, and I will give thee a crown of life. (Rev. ii. 10.) The perfect victory of which they give, not indeed an assurance, but a hope, is the victory of the redeemed soul, removed by death, from the reach of every enemy; yet, in part, they are an earnest of victories and deliverances upon earth, which are in their measure shadows of the final victory, whose reward never ends.

Q. What is the use that should be made of these War-Songs, thus given to us?

A. Regard should be had to the necessities and circumstances of the case; for God Almighty being all-powerful is able to hear the prayers of his people, and to give peace in their time, so that they shall scarcely need to make use of Songs, that would nevertheless be full of comfort and encouragement in the midst of trouble and danger.

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The rule to be given is, "See that the Psalm be wisely adapted to the needs and circumstances of those who use it;" for God, who has provided for whatever may happen, leaves to us the wise adaptation of His gifts, to our needs, as they occur in His Providence.

Q. Which among the Psalms have in an unusual degree, the character of War-Songs?

A. Psalm 2, 82, 122, 128, 143, 149.



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CHAPTER X.

The Psalter the Song-Book of the Kingdom of Christ.

OF THE FINAL REST AND BLESSEDNESS OF THE GOOD—THE FINAL MISERY AND TORMENT OF THE BAD.

Q. If the life of the CHRISTIAN upon this earth, within the kingdom of grace, be a pilgrimage towards a better life in the kingdom of CHRIST that is above, and the Psalter be the Song-book of this present kingdom of grace, ought we not to expect to find much mention in it of that which shall be in the end, in the kingdom of CHRIST that is to come?

A. Nothing can be more reasonable, than that the Songs given of God to his servants, whom he has placed upon earth in a state of daily journeying towards a better country, should often speak of things which await them at the end of their pilgrimage in the country whither they are going. Persons engaged in a long and doubtful journey, are commonly very much occupied with surmises as to what will happen at the end of it: and hence, there are few subjects that come more home to the heart of the wayfarer, than the thought, either how he shall acquit himself of his task or gain the end he has in view, or how he

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shall fare among those to whom he is going, or what he may expect to meet with at the end of his journey. Since then, the CHRISTIAN pilgrimage in the present kingdom of grace is a true and real pilgrimage towards the kingdom of glory in heaven above, nothing will be more in the hearts of true Christians than the thought of the end of their pilgrimage; it is, therefore, to be expected, that an allwise and merciful God, should provide for and satisfy these anxious thoughts of his servants in the Songs which He has given them to be the companions of their pilgrimage.

Q. How, and in what manner do the Psalms speak of that which shall be in the end?

A. Like all other prophecy which reveals things to come, the language of the Psalms touching that which is to happen in the end, is to us, now full of figure and parable, all of which the event will clear up and justify.

Yet, the Psalter being intended as a manual for daily use during the continuance of this present state of pilgrimage, a large portion of that which it reveals respecting the end is perfectly plain and intelligible, and exactly suited to the needs of those to whom it has been given.

Q. What is the special need for the revelations which are made in the Psalms respecting the end?

A. It has been said above, that the Psalms represent the kingdom of Jesus CHRIST as being

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placed within a corrupt world, abounding in enemies and deceivers, yet without any visible means of self-defence and protection, numbering, or claiming to number all nations of the earth among its subjects, many of whom are either mere dissemblers, or open enemies. It has been also said, that notwithstanding the apparently helpless and defenceless condition of the kingdom, its calling is to make war upon, and to rise up against the wicked, and to root out all the ungodly out of the earth; that these, in return, hate the faithful servant of Christ, and seek occasion against him; which hatred, on the part of the ungodly, and the lovers of this world, added to many inward infirmities, are causes of sorrow that make the servant of the Lord to go on his way weeping. And, whereas God does not show Himself, or His great power openly, but witholds His vengeance in such wise, as to put the faith of the righteous to trial, who, on seeing how the wicked man is permitted to blaspheme God daily, not only without any apparent punishment, but even prospering in every thing to which he puts his hand, is tempted to question whether God either can or will punish, and to doubt whether he does or does not behold ungodliness and wrong. And further, seeing that God does not govern this world in such a manner as to bestow what are considered to be the prizes of this world upon the righteous, as the reward of their service, but, on the con-

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trary, frequently suffers their righteousness to become the very occasion of their coming into trouble, which greater looseness or want of principle would have enabled them to avoid, so as that, in point of earthly prospects and the attainment of the things of the world, commonly accounted desirable, the CHRISTIAN is placed at a positive and signal disadvantage, and they who love Jesus CHRIST are chastened every day, while the way of him that doeth after evil counsels actually prospers.

This being not merely a sight daily displayed before the eyes of the servant and follower of Jesus CHRIST, but that very living state of things, in the midst of which his own life and personal experience is cast, and being, moreover, the source whence arise all the difficulties which beset his course from without, nothing can possibly be more needful to every Christian, than such clear information respecting the end of his course as shall make amends to him for all that he is called upon to tolerate and bear with in faith whilst it lasts. Because if the present seems, on the one hand, to all outward appearance, to be full of nothing but misery and disadvantage on the side of faith, humility, and perseverance; and on the other hand, full of nothing but prosperity and triumph on the part of irreligion and self-will; some very clear intimations respecting the time to come, are absolutely needed to countervail the influence, which

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the outward surface of this present world is certain to exercise upon those, who either cannot, from want of knowledge, or do not, from want of faith, look forward to the time to come. Neither can it be said, the need of some such countervailing encouragement is an imaginary one, or only a fiction of Christianity, for it is one that has been felt by good men long before the Christian church was sent into the world on the errand which she is now discharging, as the following complaint of a heathen Poet, among much of a similar nature that might be cited, evinces not a little to the point—

Καὶ τοῦτ', ἀθανάτων βασιλῆυ, πῶς ἐστι δίκαιον,
ἔργων ὅστις ἀνὴρ ἐκτὸς ἐὼν ἀδίκων,
μή τιν' ὑπερβασίην κατέχων μήθ' ὅρκον ἀλιτρὸν,
ἀλλὰ δίκαιος ἐὼν, μὴ τὰ δίκαια παθεῖν;
Τίς δὴ καὶ βροτὸς ἄλλος, ὁρῶν πρὸς τοῦτον, ἔπειτα
ἅζοιτ' ἀθανάτους; καὶ τίνα θομὸν ἔχων;
ὁππότ' ἀνὴρ ἄδικος, καὶ ἀτάσθαλος ὄυτε τευ ἀνδρὸς,
ὄυτε τι ἀθανάτων μῆνιν ἀλευάμενος.

ὑβρίζει, πλούτῳ κεκορημένος ὁι δε δίκαιοι
τρύχονται, χαλεπῇ τειρόμενοι πενίῃ;

Theognis,—Γνωμαι.—line 740—750.

"And now, oh king of the gods! how can this be just, that a man who hath done no wicked thing, who hath not wronged his neighbour, or sworn falsely, but is clean in all his dealings, should suffer wrongfully.

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"What man can henceforth, when he seeth these things, fear the gods? what encouragement can he have, when the unrighteous and evil doer, that feareth neither God nor man, prospers in the world and has riches in possession, while the just man goes about, oppressed and in beggary."

Now it is a saying of the wise man, Whatsoever thou doest, remember the end, and thou shalt never do amiss, (Ecclesiasticus,) whence it appears, that in his view, it was this very knowledge of that which is hereafter to be, which not only clears up the perplexities and difficulties of this present life, but is that which helps together, with the inward grace of God, towards the acting a Christian part in this present life, notwithstanding all the strong discouragements that the outward appearance of things presents. This necessity of being guided by a well-informed faith in that which shall be, and taking heed not to be misled by that which now is, forms a most needful part of Christian doctrine, according to St. Paul's words, "not looking at the things which are *seen*, but the things which are *not seen;* for the things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen, are eternal." (2 Cor. iv. 18.)

Here then, is a wonderful provision of mercy and tender care on the part of God, evinced for us in the Psalms. For that very knowledge and revelation of that which is to be in the end, which we now need in order to escape being

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deceived by the things that are *seen*, and to discover the real truth through the outward surface of things which now meet the eye, the Psalms do most richly contain. Almighty God in the Songs which he has given us for companions in the house of our pilgrimage, has taught, and brings to our mind all that is needful to be known respecting the end; and has thus put those who will believe beyond any danger of being deceived by what they see in the world: so that, although the outward sight which meets the Christian in the world, is, beyond all doubt, a strong encouragement to him to neglect all virtue and piety; yet, the revelations of the Psalter are a far stronger and and more binding encouragement to their cultivation and practice.

Q. What is the substance of the revelation which is made in the Psalter respecting the end?

A. Two great truths are there foretold:

I. That though Almighty God witholds his power for a season; yet that the day of his recompense will certainly come, when he will bring his last and final judgment of vengeance that will never end upon the impenitent evil doers.

II. That the patient abiding of the meek shall not perish for ever, but that they who have served and waited patiently for God, shall be rewarded by him with salvation and blessedness for evermore in the kingdom of God.

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Q. Does the Psalter represent Almighty God as reserving his punishment of the wicked entirely to the future day of his wrath, or as interposing to punish them from time to time in this present life?

A. The Psalter contains so many prayers which call upon God to punish and confound the wicked, that it would be impossible to suppose that God will not punish at all except at the day of judgment. His judgments and punishments must therefore be believed to be from time to time inflicted in this present life, and to be intended as shadows and earnests of that which shall be hereafter.

Q. What particular Psalms especially foretell the final punishment of the evil, and the salvation of the Saints?

A. For Psalms which especially foretell this, the table in the Appendix may be consulted. But these two great truths are also scattered up and down through the whole Psalter in such a manner, that the faithful are continually put in mind of them.

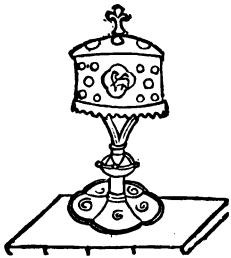
Q. Are any special particulars revealed respecting the great day of God's judgment?

A. Its solemnities and glories are foretold, together with its suddenness, bringing mingled surprise and confusion to the wicked; and the exulting and triumphant joy of an unexpected deliverance to the righteous.

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Q. Are not many mysteries respecting the end revealed in the Psalms under types and figures?

A. Without doubt, there is much revealed respecting the end under parables and figures; but, as was before said, the understanding of these belongs to an advanced state of CHRISTIAN life, and is to be attained only by special application.



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CONCLUSION.

Q. What is the main object of all that has been here said?

A. The end here aimed at, is not to lead to a barren and empty knowledge of the Psalter; but to teach the Christian to acknowledge it to be the gift of God, to himself personally, and having taught him to regard it as such, to assist him to make that thankful, wise, and understanding use of the gift, which will be in accordance with the forethought and loving-kindness of the Giver.

Q. Can any short concluding suggestions be given to impress the mind with a sense of the value and due use that should be made of the Psalter?

A. It will be most profitable always to bear firmly in mind the following five points:

1. That the Psalter contains the divinely appointed Songs of the kingdom of grace of Jesus Christ, in which we have our place by baptism.

2. That being written through inspiration of the Holy Ghost, it is impossible that any thing in the whole world can be better to be constantly used by Christian people.

3. That we ought not to esteem modern Christian hymn-books, or works of piety, useful as they may be in their place, in comparison with

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the Psalms, which are the work and the gift of God.

4. That as regards their use, we should bear in mind that they were intended to be sung with the voice, as well as to be understood with the understanding.

5. That the kingdom of the grace of God being only for a time, and as a state of preparation for another kingdom, if we would hope to be admitted to sing the Song of Moses and of the Lamb in the kingdom of glory, we cannot be too diligent in singing the divine Songs of the kingdom of grace, which the Psalms are, and which evil spirits, on that account, so greatly hate and fear.

Q. Can any short suggestions be given with regard to the use of the Psalter ?

A. As a book of devotion in church, it will be well to observe two things :

1. Before you go to church, carefully read over the Psalms that will be there sung, and give all your powers of mind and meditation to try to understand them.

2. Try to take your part in singing them with all your whole heart, mind, and soul, being assured, that by so doing, you will find a depth of meaning thereby brought out, that will at once please and surprise you, and be a source of never ending delight.

As a book of private devotion, its use has been

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explained, to which may be added these parting cautions:

1. Remember that the Psalter, being the work of God the Holy Ghost, it must always be used seriously and devoutly, and never taken up as a book of idle amusement. A book which JESUS CHRIST used as a book of prayer and devotion, must never be idly treated. Not a single Psalm should be ever repeated without a distinct understanding, that every use of the Psalter should be a religious act, to be gone about in a serious and religious way.—This must never be forgotten.

2. That every pious CHRISTIAN should, if possible, make some daily and stated use of the Psalter in his religious exercises, at whatever hour he is accustomed to pray: for this purpose, some portions of the 118th Psalm are eminently fitted.

Q. What parting advice can be given respecting the use of the Psalter?

A. St. Bernard, as cited by Cardinal Bona advises,—

"As food is sweet to the mouth, so is a Psalm to the heart. Only let not the faithful and wise soul neglect to chew it with the teeth of her understanding, lest, if it be swallowed down whole, the palate be cheated of that savour which is sweeter than honey, and the honey-comb. But if with the apostle, thou dost sing the Psalm

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with the spirit and the understanding, thou shalt know the truth of that saying which Jesus Christ spake: 'The words I have spoken unto you, they are spirit and they are life.' Thus shall thy soul be satiated with fatness, and thy burnt offering be accepted—thus shalt thou please the king and the princes, and shalt have favour with all the people."

Lastly, bear in mind these words of Thomas a Kempis, quoted by Gerbert:—

"I have around me my brethren, I can listen to their song, I have all that I seem to need; yet if Thou, O God! shalt leave me to mine own inward poverty, 'tis but in vain, and to no purpose that I have them all!"



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Appendix.

TABLE, OR INVENTORY, OF THE CONTENTS OF THE PSALTER.

CLASS I.—Acts of the Soul.

I. Addressed to God.
II. In suffering, arising from
III. In joy, arising from

1.—Addressed to God.

I. Faith, 11, 30, 120, 122.
II. Hope, 12, 15, 22, 24, 30, 70, 129.
III. Love, 17, 22, 41, 62, 114.
IV. Contrition, 24, 31, 37, 50.
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Note.—The 118th Psalm being in itself nearly a completo manual of prayer and meditation, has been almost left out of this inventory, from the difficulty of making references to its separate parts, owing to their concise sententious character.

PSALMS IN WHICH CHRIST IS THE SPEAKER.

XVII. Song of Christ in persecution.
XXI. Song of Christ on the cross.
XXIX. Thanksgiving of Christ.
XXX. Prayer in his suffering.
XXXIV. Prayer against his enemies.
XXXIX. Song of his work of redemption.
XL. Song of his betrayal by Judas.
LIV. Song of his agony in the garden, and his betrayal by Judas.
LV. Prayer in persecution and slander.
LVI. Song of Christ.
LVIII. Song of Christ, putting his trust in God in his sufferings.
LX. Song of Christ.
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LXX. Song of Christ in suffering.
LXXIV. Song of Christ of his coming in judgment.
LXXXV. Prayer of Christ.
LXXXVII. Song of Christ in his agony on the cross.
LXXXVIII. Song of Christ of his own kingdom.
C. Song of Christ.
CVIII. Song of Christ in suffering from the treachery of Judas.
CXV. Song of Christ.
CXXXIX. Prayer of Christ for protection.
CXL. Prayer of Christ for patience in affliction.

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PSALMS IN WHICH THE CHURCH IS THE SPEAKER.

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XLV.	Song of the Church.
LIX.	A complaint to God.
LXV.	A song of praise and complaint to God.
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LXVII.	A song of the Church, of the ascension and kingdom of Christ.
LXXIII.	A lamentation.
LXXVIII.	A lamentation.
LXXXII.	A song of the Church against her enemies.
XC.	A song of the Church concerning Christ.
XCVIII. XCIX.	Songs of praise.
CI.	Song of the Church in suffering, imploring mercy.
CXVII.	Song of the Church in her warfare.
CXXIII.	Song of the Church against her enemies.
CXXVIII.	Song of the Church in her warfare.
CXXXI.	Song of the Church.
CXLI.	Prayer of the Church.
CXLIII.	Penitential prayer of the Church.
CXLIX.	Song of triumph of the Church.

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A PREPARATION FOR A SINGER,

PREVIOUS TO THE MASS OR OTHER SOLEMN OFFICE.

If you have the opportunity, withdraw, and collecting your thoughts, reflect for a few moments after the manner of a short meditation, upon,

I. The holiness and majesty of the ever blessed Trinity, to whose praise you are about to sing.

II. The greatness of the house of God, (Baruch iii. 24,) where, in the presence of invisible angels, the mystery of the holy Sacrifice is about to be accomplished.

III. Love of your brethren, with whom you are about to worship.

Affection.—My soul hath a desire and longing to enter into the courts of Thine house.

Prayer.—Grant, O Lord, that what I am about to sing with my mouth, I may believe in my heart, and never belie in word or deed, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Antiphon.—Remember not, Lord, our offences, nor the offences of our forefathers, neither take thou vengeance of our sins.

Ps. lxxxiii. Quam dilecta tabernacula.

Ps. cxv. Credidi propter quod locutus sum.

Ps. cxxi. Lætatus sum in his, quæ dicta sunt, mihi.

GLORIA PATRI, &c.

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Antiphon.—Remember, &c.
Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.

OUR FATHER, &c.

V. And lead us not into temptation.
R. But deliver us from evil.
V. Thou shalt open my lips, O Lord.
R. And my mouth shall show forth thy praise.
V. O GOD, make speed to save me.
R. O Lord, make haste to help me.

LET US PRAY.

Open my mouth, O Lord, that I may bless Thy holy name. Cleanse my heart from all vain, perverse, and evil thoughts; enlighten my understanding; kindle my affections that I may be able to sing skilfully, attentively, and devoutly, and be found worthy to be heard in the sight of Thy divine Majesty, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O Lord, in the union of that divine intention, wherewith Thou Thyself while on earth didst sing praise unto GOD, I offer Thee this offering of my lips. Amen.

A THANKSGIVING.

Antiphon.—O Lord, holiness becometh thine house for ever.

Ps. cl. Laudate Dominum in Sanctis ejus.

GLORIA PATRI, &c.

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Antiphon.—O Lord, &c.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

OUR FATHER, &c.

V. And lead us not into temptation,

R. But deliver us from evil.

V. All Thy works praise Thee, O God,

R. And Thy Saints give thanks unto Thee.

V. Let the Saints be joyful with glory.

R. Let them rejoice in their beds.

V. Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us,

R. But unto Thy name give the praise.

V. Lord, hear my prayer,

R. And let my cry come unto Thee.

LET US PRAY.

Almighty God, the loftiness of such as be lowly, who by the mouth of Thy holy servant Moses wast pleased to instruct Thy people by the singing of a sacred song, have mercy upon the weakness and frailty of Thy servant, and let this offering be acceptable in Thy sight. And vouchsafe so to aid and direct me in this present life by Thy Holy Spirit, that I may be found worthy to sing the song of the same Moses the servant of God, and of the Lamb in the life to come, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hail Mary, &c.

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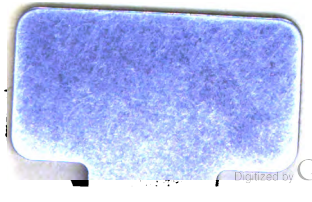
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